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THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE,

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

Vol. I.

FOR 1813.

"SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE." *ST. PAUL.*

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THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

No. 1. *MAY*, 1813. VOL. I.

THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE INTRODUCED.

JOSHUA xxii. 10, 11, 12.

"*AND when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that are in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to.*

"*And the children of Israel heard-say, Behold the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh have built an altar over against the land of Canaan, in the borders of Jordan, at the passage of the children of Israel.*

"*And when the children of Israel heard of it, the whole congregation of Israel gathered themselves together at Shiloh, to go up to war against them.*"

Thus by a mere *hear-say* nine and a half of the tribes of Israel were agitated, put in motion, and gathered together to go to war against their unoffending brethren. They "heard-say," that their brethren had set up an altar; and so much was true; but this might be without any criminal intention; yea, from the most pious motives. But the hear-say excited a jealousy, that the new altar had been erected in rebellion against the Lord. One stirred up another; the fire of jealousy spread like lightning through the tribes; and prior to making any proper inquiry, as to the motives of their brethren, a vast army was assembled to go to war. But God suffered them not to commence the expected slaughter. Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the priest, and ten princes, were sent to expostulate with the supposed rebels, to bring them to a sense of the evil they had done. They went with full confidence, that their brethren had committed a great trespass against the Lord. Nor does it appear that it had occurred to their minds, that possibly the error was on their own part; for, instead of making a friendly inquiry, they introduced their business by an implicit charge of rebellion. As ambassadors of a numerous people, they opened their embassy in this manner—"Thus saith the whole congregation of the Lord, what trespass is this, that ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from following the Lord?" And as though this were not enough to say prior to inquiry, they proceeded—"Is

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the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleansed until this day (although there was a plague in the congregation of the Lord) but that ye must turn away this day from following the Lord? And it will be, seeing ye rebel today against the Lord, that tomorrow he will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel."

Phinehas was probably the chief speaker on this occasion; but he spake in behalf of the ten princes, and of the tribes they represented. After hearing such a confident charge, and solemn expostulation, from so good a man as Phinehas, who would imagine that it was still possible, that the accused brethren were innocent of the crime alleged against them? But before we approve the conduct of the accuser, let us hear the reply of the accused.

"Then the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, answered and said to the heads of the thousands of Israel—The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know; if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the Lord, (save us not this day) that we have built us an altar to turn from following the Lord, or if to offer thereon burnt-offering, or meat-offering, or to offer peace-offerings thereon, let the Lord himself require it: And if we have not rather done it, for fear of this thing, saying, In time to come your children might speak to our children, saying, What have ye to do with the Lord God of Israel? For the Lord hath made Jordan a border between us and you;—ye children of Reuben and children of Gad, ye have no part in the Lord: so shall your children make our children cease from fearing the Lord. Therefore, we said, let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt-offering, nor for sacrifice; but that it may be a witness between us and you, and our generations after us, that we might do the service of the Lord—that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the Lord."

Thus the accused brethren vindicated themselves in respect to the charge of rebellion against the Lord, and against the other tribes. So far had it been from their hearts to rebel in building the altar, that they had done this thing from attachment to the worship which God had instituted, and from a desire that the connexion, which had existed between them and their brethren, might be perpetuated from generation to generation.

Although we cannot but disapprove the rashness of Phinehas and the ten princes, in accusing their brethren of rebellion against the Lord, yet we cannot but be pleased with their candor in hearing the reply of the accused. The candor, with which they heard, may justly be inferred from the happy effect, which the explanation had on their own minds. "When Phinehas the priest, and the princes of the congregation, and heads of the thousands of Israel, which were with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the children of Manasseh spake, it pleased them. And

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Phinehas, the son of Eleazar the priest, said to the accused brethren, "This day we perceive, that the Lord is among us, because ye have not committed this trespass against the Lord: Now ye have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the Lord." Thus Phinehas, with becoming frankness and candor, expressed his entire satisfaction in that conduct of his brethren, which, before the explanation, had appeared to him so criminal, as to be a just ground of war.

This portion of sacred history contains important lessons of instruction and admonition. In the first place, we may see the importance of inquiry respecting the motives, by which our fellow-men are governed, before we censure their conduct. It would have been much to the credit of Phinehas and the ten princes, had they suspended their accusations, until a fair and friendly inquiry could have been made respecting the design of their brethren in erecting the altar. Such a candid course of proceeding would have saved a great expense and a great disturbance. It would also have saved these ambassadors from the mortification they felt, in reflecting on the folly and impropriety of their conduct in judging a matter before they heard it. As good men, they must have been pleased on finding, that they had no ground of complaint against their brethren; but it would have added to their happiness, if, on reflection, they had found as little ground of complaint against themselves.

In the second place, we may observe, from the example of Phinehas, that even good men are liable to be unduly influenced by hear-says, to indulge unreasonable jealousies, and to judge and censure too precipitately. But these are faults against which we cannot guard with too much care. From these faults originate a great part of the contentions which exist in society. It is believed, that nine tenths of all the difficulties and alienations, which have taken place among christians, would have been prevented, had there been due care in these particulars. And in ten thousand instances their hasty censures one of another have been as groundless as were the accusations brought against those who set up the altar of witness. Nor are men always so prudent and candid as Phinehas and the princes were on that occasion. Too often it has been the case, that, after men have rashly accused others of great crimes, they have not had candor enough to hear what the accused might say in their own defence. However, for the honor of religion, we feel bound to say, that darkness is not more opposed to light than such conduct is to the spirit of christianity. A willingness to see and to confess our faults is essential to the christian temper.

In the third place, we should remark, that although good men of ancient times had their failings, yet these are not recorded for our *imitation*, but for our *admonition*. By carefully observing the things in which they failed, we should be put on our guard, lest we imitate the worst part of their characters. We

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may admit, that the zeal of Phinehas was the occasion of his imprudences; but we must also admit, that in those instances of imprudence, his zeal was not according to knowledge, or charity. It is probable, that many men make their zeal in a supposed good cause an excuse for their rashness in condemning others. But we ought to remember, that the second commandment is like the first; that no part of our conduct is more pleasing to God, than that in which we do unto others, as we would that they should do unto us; and, that rash and censorious judging is as strictly forbidden, as idolatry or blasphemy. It will be in vain for us to plead our love to God, as an apology for hating our brethren; and as much in vain to pretend that love to the souls of men, to truth, or to the welfare of Christ's kingdom, led us to treat our fellow-creatures unkindly. True christian *zeal* is but the *fervor* of christian *love;* and the more we possess of this, the more careful we shall be "to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God;" the more we shall exercise a godly jealousy in respect to ourselves, and the more candor we shall feel towards others.

Within a few weeks, many of the several tribes of professed christians in New England, have "heard-say," that a new ALTAR, or a new *periodical work*, was about to be set up in the vicinity of Boston. What feelings, or what jealousies, this hear-say has excited, we know not; and we feel happy in not knowing, that our motives have been rashly condemned. But, if any of our brethren have so far indulged jealousy, as to accuse us of erecting this altar in rebellion against the Lord, or with a desire to effect a schism among the tribes of Israel, we hope they will imitate another part of the conduct of Phinehas, by candidly hearing our explanation and defence.

If we have not misapprehended our own motives, we may humbly say, "The Lord God of gods *knoweth*," and our brethren *will know*, that we have no wish to withdraw ourselves from the worship of the God of Israel, or to establish, or promote, a party interest in opposition, or even in contradistinction, to the common interest of all the friends of christianity. Our *altar* is intended as an *altar of witness* and not of *rebellion*. By this we mean to witness before the world, our love to God, his word, and his worship; our love to the the Lord Jesus, and his institutions; our love to our fellow christians of different denominations; our concern for those of our fellow men who are in a state of alienation from God; our desires for the prosperity of Christ's kingdom, and for the peace and welfare of society.

With deep regret and concern, we have witnessed an increase of a spirit of bitterness and alienation in our land, and even among those who profess to be the disciples of Jesus. We mean, that our altar shall be a witness for us, that we cordially disapprove such a spirit; and, that it is our aim to cultivate in ourselves, and in others, the mild, candid, benevolent, and forgiving temper recommended by the precepts and the example of the Prince of life.

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While we may bear testimony against what shall appear to us erroneous in opinion, in temper, and in practice, we hope not to forget our own liability to err, and our need of the candor of others. In expressing our opinions of the doctrines and the duties of christianity, we shall aim to make the Bible our standard, and not "teach for doctrines," or for duties, "the commandments of men." As the field of religious knowledge is boundless, and as all our forefathers have been liable to err, we shall cherish the spirit of humble and free inquiry, and disapprove the spirit of bigotry and intolerance. Neither the *antiquity*, nor the *novelty* of any opinion will be admitted by us, as any certain evidence of its *truth* or its *incorrectness*. Error, as well as truth, may be old and grey-headed, and may have had the sanction of great, learned, and even good men, for many centuries. And we have no fear, that christianity will suffer by the severest scrutiny, or the most thorough investigation. Yea, should such a scrutiny even undermine some of our own present opinions, we may have the happiness of exchanging darkness for light, and dross for gold. In such a case, nothing would be lost which we wish to retain.

Believing that it was the great object of our Saviour's mission, to bring "life and immortality to light," and "to redeem to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," a people to be distinguished as his friends by their "love one to another," these things will be kept in view as of the first importance. Therefore, the friends of Christ of every denomination may expect, that in this work, they will be treated with candor; and that no attempts will be made by us, to destroy their characters, or abate their usefulness. If they differ from us in opinion, we hope to remember, that we differ as much from them; and, that God hath committed all judgment to his Son, and not to us. The rights, which we shall claim for ourselves, we shall allow to others. And the right of private judgment in matters of faith is a right, which we shall not *surrender* in respect to ourselves, nor *deny* in respect to those who may dissent from our opinions.

It is our settled opinion, that christianity will never appear to the best advantage, until its professors shall be brought to *believe*, and to *feel*, that "LOVE is the fulfilling of the law," and that without love they are nothing, as to the approbation of God. So far as a belief in unintelligible doctrines of human invention shall be regarded as the grand criterion of the christian character, or as essential to it, so far we may expect that bitter animosities will be the disgrace of professed christians; and so far professors will treat the apostle's exhortation with contempt, or disregard, —"Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering: forbearing one another, forgiving one another. If any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also, do ye. And above all things put on charity, which is the bond

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of perfectness; and let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called, and be ye thankful." But, if professors of religion can be brought to a cordial compliance with this exhortation, they will then shine as lights in the world, and others seeing their good works will glorify our Father who is in heaven.

While we implore the divine blessing on our labors, may we not also affectionately invite all the friends of Christ, of every denomination, to become workers together with us. If there be any object of human pursuit, respecting which we might hope for the favor of God, and the co-operation of all *good people*, such we believe is the object of this work. Do professors of religion wish the conversion of the wicked, who are eye witnesses of their daily walk, or the conversion of the heathen in distant lands? What course can they adopt, more direct and effectual, for the accomplishment of their wishes, than the one now proposed? Is it not in vain for them to talk to their neighbours about the excellency of the christian religion, its tendency to unite men in one common interest, to subdue their lusts and pride, and to make them kind, humble, forbearing, and peaceable; while there is to be seen, among professors themselves, so much of the genuine fruits of *party spirit*, bitterness, wrath, clamor, evil speaking one of another, envying and strife, &c. &c.? The conversion of the heathen is indeed an important object. But to what do we wish to convert them? To christianity? or to a party interest, and such a state of alienation among themselves, as actually exists among professors of religion in this land? If in our attempts to propogate the gospel among the heathen, we could assure them, that in our own land it had produced among its professed friends love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, forbearance, and unity; and set aside envying, strife, clamor, reviling, and censoriousness; so that professors of religion can be distinguished from the world by their love one to another; what a motive would this be to the heathen to listen to the instructions of the gospel? But if our missionaries state to the heathen the *whole truth*, in respect to the manner in which professors of religion in this country treat one another, will not their hearers naturally infer, that the christian religion would be of little advantage to them, as to their peace and happiness in the present life? Would they not be likely to say to us, *Physicians, heal yourselves?* If your religion be *love*, why do you *hate* one another?

From these reflections it appears, that to heal divisions, and to unite the friends of Christ, must be in effect to strengthen the cause of christianity. To aid us in this work, we cordially invite the ministers of the gospel, the editors and writers of theological works, and all the friends of the Lord Jesus. The cause is good, the field of labor is extensive, and there is ample employment for all who "pray for the peace of Jerusalem." And to all who cordially engage in this work, we may say, by way of encouragement, "Great is your reward in heaven."

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SKETCH OF THE CHARACTER OF THE REV. DR. ELIOT.

The following is an extract from a sermon, delivered at the Thursday lecture in Boston on the day of the interment of Dr. Eliot. Some of the friends, who knew him best, were of opinion, that the view here given of his character is true to nature; and at their request it is inserted in the Christian Disciple.

THERE are few cases, I believe, where our hope can be more full of assurance, than in that of the beloved and respected man, whose remains we are in a few hours to follow to the tomb and commit to its peaceful and sacred custody. I could wish, that the office of speaking of his character had fallen on one, more worthy of delineating it, as it merits to be drawn. Yet in truth it would be an offence against its singular and perfectly unaffected modesty, to attempt to adorn it by the pomp of splendid and formal eulogy. I am not willing therefore to suffer this occasion to escape, without at least a passing tribute of my affection and respect for a man, who was my father's friend, and, I may be permitted to say it, mine own friend.

Dr. Eliot was one of those men, who are and who deserve to be universally beloved for qualities, which, while they claim the truest respest, do not repulse the most familiar affection by their overpowering grandeur. The peculiar habits of his mind led him perhaps to delight more in inquiry and research, than in very abstruse and original thinking; rather to collect and treasure up what is already known, than to employ himself in arranging the mass of knowledge or enlarging its limits by his own speculations. The extent of his reading on subjects connected with theology and general literature was not, I presume, surpassed by any among us. The strong power of his mind was memory; and he had collected and retained a great fund of curious and very uncommon learning, particularly on the history of the church and the history and biography of our own country. This knowledge, together with his knowledge of mankind—for without any ostentation he was a most acute and judicious observer of human character—made him an universally pleasing companion. There is no one, who ever knew him, who does not remember with complacency and affection the readiness and copiousness with which he communicated his knowledge; the vein of perfectly chaste and innocent pleasantry, which ran through his conversation; the essential good nature and sound judgment, which characterised his remarks; the occasional beams of fancy, which played over his thoughts; and the smile of most sweet and ineffable benevolence, the unclouded "sunshine of the soul," which always lighted up his countenance.

But Dr. Eliot had higher qualities than these. He possessed all the elements of a thoroughly virtuous and christian character. His life was always governed by a predominant sense of duty to God. His heart was alive to all the charities of our nature. He had not a particle of envy or ma-

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lignity, not a single drop of gall in his whole composition. His breast was a stranger to deceit; he was an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile. Though the gentler virtues were evidently most congenial to his disposition, yet, when the occasion required it, he did not fail to show, that he was not deficient in more energetic and commanding qualities of the mind. There was in him an uncommon healthiness and purity of principle, a singleness and openness of heart, an integrity which nothing could bend and nothing pervert; and to all his good qualities he united a transparant simplicity of character, which you might expect to find and could not fail to admire and love even in a child.

He filled up the duties of life with fidelity and honor. He was a tender husband, a most affectionate parent, and a true and steady friend. Our university never lost a sincerer advocate; the numerous literary and charitable societies, of which he was a member, a more faithful associate; and the cause of truth, and civil and religious freedom, a more conscientious and unfailing supporter.

As a minister of the gospel, his claims to respect were not few. In his theological opinions he was moderate and liberal—a temperate, yet not a timid critic—neither an enthusiast nor a latitudinarian—in short one of that class of christians, which, if not the most systematic and, if you please, philosophical in their theories, have yet probably kept the great practical and essential truths of christianity more steadily before their eyes, than any religious denomination in christendom. In his official ministrations you all knew him; and if any should say, that there are others to whom Providence has entrusted greater gifts of eloquence and interest; yet, in the more private and perhaps more useful offices of a christian pastor—the tears of his congregation bear me witness when I say it—you will not easily find a more faithful, affectionate, and devoted servant of Christ.

How deeply and sincerely he was impressed with the truths of that religion, which he taught, no one, who knows the sublime composure, the unostentatious dignity, the perfect submission with which he met his last summons, will need to be assured. I can never forget the few moments, which, in the interval of his severe agony, I was permitted to pass with him—when I received the last affectionate pressure of his hand—when he faultered out his expressions of joy at my recovered health; his prayers for my future usefulness and fidelity; his acquiescence in the divine government in removing him from the world; his testimony that the views of the religion he had preached gave him consolation and support, even while the hand of death was pressing heavily upon him.*—In such a frame of

* "You know what my religious opinions have been," said he. "They have been liberal, though not so liberal as those of some others. Such as they are, I have endeavoured to take them all from the Bible. Through life I have always valued every man, of whatever sentiments, according to his character. My views of religious truth give me support in this hour." I

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mind as this, did this truly good and venerable man wait the appointed time of his change. And I do not fear to say, that if he had done nothing else, as a minister, for the cause of religion than this—if he had left behind him no other memorial of his usefulness—the eloquence of such a death, the value of such an exemplification of the efficacy of religious impressions in giving serenity to the close of life and shedding so divine a ray of consolation over the darkness of the tomb—this alone would be sufficient to vindicate his claims to a place among the powerful and persuasive preachers of the gospel.—He has gone to receive his reward:—"And I heard a voice, saying unto me, write: blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

AN ADDRESS TO CHRISTIANS ON FAMILY RELIGION.

It is not to be concealed, that the salutary discipline of domestic government, the great business of religious education, and, above all, the reasonable and interesting practice of family worship, have fallen into a degree of disuse, of which it is more easy to conjecture the extent, than to counteract the example—more easy to lament the symptoms, than to predict the consequences. This address is designed to awaken the attention of christians to this important subject.

Christians! The worship of God in your families is a *reasonable* service, and may be rendered a most *profitable* service. These are the two heads of our remarks.

First, then, it is a *reasonable* service. If there be any who doubt this, their reasons are to me utterly beyond conjecture. It is not easy to imagine any reasons, which can be suggested in favor of public congregational worship, which are not equally strong in favor of the worship of families. The same God, whose providence governs communities, presides over the small circles of which communities are composed. It is he who setteth the solitary in families. It is he who has united them in ties more intimate, than any which can bind together the members of a large society.

Is it of any consequence, that the public should be impressed with reverence for God and his government? Surely then no practice can be indifferent, which will make those impressions early, stamp them deeply, and give ideas of religion an intimate association with the most tender, amiable, and lasting affections of the human heart.

It is not necessary to insist on the authority, which the head of a family possesses for this service, and which it is his duty to

observed to him, that in moments of danger those points, on which Christians differed, seemed to lose their importance, and the mind rested on those great essential truths, on which all men agree. He assented to this with eagerness. He added after a pause—"I trust in the mercy of God, declared by Jesus Christ his Son." His extreme faintness made it necessary here to close the conversation.

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exercise with fidelity and affection. However much the relaxation of the sentiments of religion, conspiring with other maxims of insubordination, may have enfeebled the authority of parents and masters in this age and under this government; the *obligation* of those, who are at the head of families, to provide for the religious wants of those, who depend on them for support, is still commensurate with the power—for it is the power which every where constitutes the obligation; and I shall refuse to believe that the power is extinct, till some serious attempt to revive and exercise it shall have failed. The father and the master may yet be the priest of his household.

But you ask, is it not enough that we observe our private devotions, in which we pray *for* our families, but must we also pray *with* them? I might reply by asking—is it enough that I give orders for the provision of the day, though I never take a repast with my family? Is it enough that I secretly wish my children should possess knowledge, which I take no care to communicate; or habits of which I set not the example; or principles which I take no pains to enforce? Unless it is first taken for granted that the practice which we recommend is either unnatural, unreasonable, or useless, no man, much less a christian, can have fulfilled his parental and domestic obligations, while he neglects to make an experiment at least of family worship?

Can any one imagine that topics will be wanting, while there are so many subjects of family congratulation and thanksgiving—so many occasions for acknowledging domestic sins—so many family anxieties and afflictions, wants and mercies, hopes and fears? Is not every occasion, which you are still disposed to acknowledge in public by the notes which you send to be read in the sanctuary, an occasion for domestic gratitude, or supplication, or acknowledgment? Surely every truly devout sentiment, which you are ready to make the subject of public expression in the house of God, is worthy of being expressed on the spot where it was excited—in the circle where it is most intimately felt; and how many occasions are there, which it would be painful or improper to notice in any other place?

If we look back to the manners of the ancient world, and to the practice of the very heathens themselves, we shall find the rites of family religion every where prevailing. It was a dictate of nature to those Gentiles, who, having not the law of Moses or any express revelation, were a law unto themselves. Who can avoid discerning this fact in the frequent mention of the household gods of the Pagans? How touching that passage in the Roman poet, where the old Anchises is represented, escaping from the flames of Troy, and taking in his hand the images of his domestic deities?

> The good old man with suppliant hands implored
> The gods' protection and their star adored:
> Now, now, my son, no more delay,

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I yield, I follow, where heaven shows
the way:
Keep, O my country gods! our
dwelling place,
And guard this relique of the Tro-
jan race,
This tender child!———

What! Shall the images of the heathen world cry out against us; and the voice of nature be preserved only in the fictions of poetry and the records of idolatry? Shall the men of Troy rise up in judgment against this generation, and condemn them?

Our *second* assertion was, that it is a *profitable* practice. If any thing can effectually revive and secure the fidelity of parents, the affection of husbands and wives, the moral restraint and early piety of children, the peace of domestic life, the attachment of servants, and the general order of families, it must be the revival of family religion. This must impose a check on the impetuosity of our passions, and give to the conversation of the household a sobriety and purity, which nothing else can so effectually secure. It is not easy to believe that profaneness and riot should ever find their way, much less take up their abode, in a house where the presence of God is every day acknowledged, his protection sought, his bounty acknowledged, his pardon implored.

There is also another consideration, which is by no means of little moment. By the regular reading of the scriptures in select portions, as introductory to the acts of family devotion, there is given to the young a knowledge of these sacred writings and a reverence for them, which can be in no other way so early and so easily acquired. If it could for a moment be supposed, that the heads of families stood not in need of this instruction, and that they would derive from it no advantage, yet a pious and benevolent regard to our children and domestics ought to render us all willing, punctual, and faithful in the performance of a service, which would produce the happiest and most lasting effects.

Yet there are those, who, insensible to those moral and spiritual benefits, and looking only at present and visible advantages, ask, with a most deplorable unconcern, what is the Almighty, that we should serve him, and what profit shall we have, if we pray unto him? If you think it nothing then to have those about you impressed with the fear of God; if you think it a poor consideration to raise a seed to preserve the sentiments of religion and pure christianity for succeeding generations; if you think it nothing, that those who leave your families, to establish families of their own, should carry with them the spirit of prayer and the faith of the gospel—at least reflect on the influence which the blessing of God thus faithfully sought may have upon your own industry and temporal circumstances; and upon the happiness of domestic life. The curse of the Lord is in the habitation of the wicked, but he blesseth the habitation of the just.

You complain of the irregularity and perversities of youth, that you have lost the control of your children, and that you cannot correct the evil habits which they

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have early and unguardedly formed. Do not lament the wickedness of the times, and complain that your children are ruined; but think, what have you done for them? You have neglected to call into your aid, in the government of them, that most powerful of principles, the early fear of God. Could they fail to feel a powerful reverence for the name of God, if they had been daily witnesses of domestic worship? You are shocked with their profaneness—Think where they first learned it, and where they might first have been guarded against it. Do you complain of their ingratitude, their irreverence for your advice and correction? Ah! they have not been taught their duty to the Great First Parent! Do you complain of the negligence and unfaithfulness of servants? How should it be otherwise, when so little care is taken to sanction and enforce, with the sense of religion, the sentiment of fidelity? Where are the domestics who are accustomed to hear in the families in which they live these injunctions of the apostles?—"Servants, be obedient unto your masters in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with good will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men."

There is also another consideration, which powerfully enforces this most interesting duty; and this is—that it will prepare your children and domestics for the public services of the sanctuary. Little benefit comparatively can be derived from the instruction, which is attempted to be conveyed from the pulpit, if some provision of religious rudiments and of serious impressions has not been made at home. They hear the preacher; but, without any thing to guide their thoughts, the services are to them a mere show, which engages their eyes, or sounds which strike their ears: If they have not been trained up in habits of devotion, accustomed to serious deportment at prayer, and instructed in the scriptures and the elements of christianity else where, can you expect them to enter with pleasure and interest into the service of the house of God?

I confess, when I look at the awful strides, which, from the circumstances in which we have been placed, vice, fraud, and general unprincipledness have made and will continue to make among us, my heart sometimes sinks within me. Where then, ye patriots, ye lovers of your country, who tremble for her safety—where can a check be placed to this increase of corruption, if it be not placed at home? The force of moral principle can never be preserved, if lost, or restored, but by the aid of religion; and if the little domestic societies, of which every community is composed, are not first well principled, the day of reformation is removed to an indefinite distance, and the day of evil is not far off. It is in your houses, and not in a larger association, that you can form nurseries of good men and good citizens. These are the fountains, into which the salt must be cast, or the streams, which

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issue from them, will yet flow corrupting and corrupted, and every year will swell this dead sea with new pollution, till it spreads pestilence over our country, and overwhelms the city of our God.

Some, however, who do not feel for their country, may yet feel for themselves. To such I would say—religion is the great business of our lives, and these lives are short and precarious. This is our day, in which we are exhorted to mind the things which belong to our peace, before they are hidden from our eyes forever. "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom," and this fear will not *cease* to be our truest wisdom, when the maxims and the fashions of the present age shall have vanished like a dream.

B.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE.

The holy scriptures, in all which concerns our salvation, are sufficiently level with the understandings of men in general, so that no one who inquires with a humble, devout, and diligent mind, and faithfully follows the guidance of the light which God will give him, will be exposed to any errors, endangering his final and eternal interests. In our researches for divine truth, the grand inquiries therefore should be, have I the humble, devout, and diligent mind, which becomes a disciple of Christ? Am I sincerely disposed to receive the instruction which he communicates, and to bring my will, and affections, and conduct, into entire obedience to his commands?—"So seek, and you *will* find. So knock, and it *will* be opened to you."

But every one, who is accustomed to read the scriptures, is aware, that they contain names of sects and offices, of which it is desirable to know more, than the sacred writers have informed us; —that there are in them many references to sentiments and customs, which were perfectly intelligible in the times in which they were made, but are now necessarily obscure to those, who have no source of information concerning them, but the scriptures. The influence, which established sentiments and customs have upon modes of thought and of expression, is well known to those who have traced phraseologies and opinions to their sources; and it is universal. Indeed so many examples of this influence might easily be exposed in our common conversation, that no one who knows any thing of the nature of language, will for a moment consider the obscurity, which is occasioned by such references, as an objection to the scriptures. It would have required many volumes, in addition to the Bible, to have given such an account of every name, and such an illustration of every slight reference which it contains, as would have conveyed all the knowledge, which many readers in common life would gladly have possessed. But happily, we have volumes, which contain the information which we want; and

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though they are not accessible to all christians, much labor is not demanded, either to acquire, or to communicate it.—Confining our attention, in these numbers, to the New Testament, we intend, under the title below, to give to our readers a series of these illustrations.

The object of these numbers is, first, to excite attention to the gospels; and second, to assist those who love the word of God, and are endeavouring better to understand it. We are persuaded that this department of our miscellany will be interesting to many, who read the New Testament with care and seriousness, but who have neither the leisure nor books, which are requisite, for a regular and minute investigation; and we cannot but hope that, by the momentary gratification of curiosity, which in some instances we may give to others, they may be induced to read the records of our religion, which they have neglected;—and that in the pursuit, to which they are thus prompted, of the most valuable knowledge, they may catch the spirit of their Master, and become in truth his disciples.

To each illustration, we shall attach the authorities from which we have derived it; and we shall follow the order of texts, as they are arranged by Lightfoot.

Illustrations of passages in the New Testament, which refer to climate, places, offices, sentiments, manners, and customs among the Jews in the time of our Saviour.

1.

Luke i. 15. "He shall be called great in the sight of the Lord, *and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink*, and shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb."

The words which we have printed in italics indicate, that John was to be a Nazarite from his birth.—But what is a Nazarite?

The name was derived from the Hebrew verb *nazar;* that is, *he was separated.* It was first applied to Joseph, who was separated from his brethren; but though it had no such meaning in its application to him, it was afterwards used to imply a peculiar separation and devotedness to God; and on that account was applied to the Nazarites. A Nazarite was separated by a profession of holiness, beyond the common prescription of the law; and he who made this profession, and practised the purity to which it bound him, was ranked with the high priest, and was supposed to possess the highest sanctity of character. There were however two sorts of Nazarites. 1. Those, who in their infancy, or before their birth, were devoted to God by their parents. 2. Those who devoted themselves. The first were always Nazarites for life. The second, only for a limited time. The rabbies say, that the shortest term, for which this vow of separation could be made, was thirty days.

The Nazarites, who voluntarily separated themselves to God, when the days of their vow were fulfilled, shaved their heads at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and burnt their hair in the fire under the sacrifice of the peace offerings. Hence

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probably, the Gentiles obtained the custom of sacrificing their hair to their gods; a custom which Lucian represents as common, and with which he himself complied. Suetonius says also, that Nero cut off his first beard, and put it into a golden box set with jewels, and consecrated it to Jupiter Capitolinus. Apollo is called in Homer "the nourisher of hair," and Æschylus speaks also of hair, which had been nourished and consecrated.

"The law of the Nazarites" may be read in the sixth chapter of Numbers. But a remarkable passage concerning this class of Jews occurs in the book of Amos. "I raised up of your sons for prophets," said God, "and of your young men for Nazarites. Is it not even thus, O children of Israel, saith the Lord? But ye gave the Nazarites *wine to drink*, and commanded the prophets, saying, prophesy not." [See chap. ii. 11, 12.] These expressions indicate, that the Nazarites enjoyed no small degree of the favor of God. The interdiction concerning *wine* was more strict upon them, even than upon the priests, for they were forbidden "to taste any thing that came of the vine tree, from the kernel, even to the husk." It was probably from this prohibition, that the Jewish doctors derive the opinion, which they assert without the least hesitation, that the vine was the tree in Paradise, by tasting the fruit of which Adam disobeyed and fell.

But three instances of Nazarites from their birth are named in the scriptures:—Sampson, Samuel, and John the Baptist. The habit, worn by a Nazarite during his separation, was a garment of hair. Such an one was worn by John, and by Elijah before him; and Grotius thinks it not unworthy of remark, that he who came in the spirit and power of Elias, and who was called Elias by the prophets, should resemble his prototype in his dress.

So high was the estimation which the Jews had of those who were separated to God as Nazarites, that they were considered, says Maimonides, as possessing for the time the sanctity of the high priest; the purpose of their separation being, their closer attention to the study of the law and the other exercises of religion. In this sentiment of the Jews, we find perhaps the best illustration of the words of our Lord in Matthew xi. 18 and 19. "*John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, he hath a devil. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, behold a man gluttonous, and a wine bibber; a friend of publicans and sinners.*" At least his reproach, in this application of it, has great force. In reference to their sentiments of the holiness of a Nazarite, he reminds them that John, the promised Elias, whom they had rejected, was a Nazarite from his birth. But to intimate at the same time the divine benignity of his own dispensation, and the greater freedom to which the gospel admitted its believers, he told them that the Son of Man came eating and drinking:—he ate and drank *with publicans and sinners.* [See Jenning's Jew. Antiq. v. i. p. 415.

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and seq. Lewis' Orig. Heb. B. 2. chap. xix. Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. in text. Grotius in Matth. iii. 4.]

2.

Matthew i. 18. "Mary was *espoused* to Joseph."

Before the giving of the law, says Maimonides, if a man and a woman agreed to marry, he introduced her into his house, and she became his wife:—but after the giving of the law, it was a precept in Israel, when a man would marry a woman, that he should receive her before witnesses, and *afterwards* that she should become his wife. This reception of a woman, with an intention and agreement of marrying her on a future day, was called an *espousal;* and not only was, it customary, in many places, for a man to espouse a woman for a considerable time before he intended to marry her; but espousals even of their young children were not unfrequently made by parents. Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. in Matth. i. 18. and Calmet's Dict. on the word *marriage.*

3.

Luke i. 63. "He asked for a *writing table.*"

Not for a "writing table," but for a *tablet.* The ancient tablets were made of wood, of brass, or of ivory. They were square, or oblong, with a hole either on one side, or at one end, by which they might be suspended against the side of a room. Children were taught to read and to write upon them; and they appear to have been used as registers of domestic expenses, &c. The sort of tablet, for which Zacharias asked, was made of pine, from which it derived its name, and was covered with wax, on which it was very easy to write. It is apparent therefore how easily he might be accommodated, when he asked for *a writing tablet.* [See Schleusner on the word, and Taylor's Fragments, 1st hundred, p. 128.

4.

Luke ii. 7. "She brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the *inn.*"

The place which is here called an *inn,* is called by travellers in the east, a "caravansary;" some of which are simply places of rest, (by the side of a fountain if possible;) and being at proper distances to accommodate travellers, are so named, though they be merely naked walls.—Others have an attendant, who is supported by the benevolence of passengers;—and others are more considerable establishments, where families reside, and where travellers may be supplied with provisions. Of this sort, without doubt, was that of Bethlehem.—Just behind these caravansaries, says Tavernier, are the stables, where the lodgings are many times as comfortable, as in the chambers of the house; and some, on account of their warmth, prefer them in winter.—The manager of the caravansary of Bethlehem was probably well known to the shepherds, and was therefore as accessible by night, as by day. [See Taylor's Frag. 1st hundred, p. 45. and 3d hundred, p. 160.

5.

Luke ii. 8. "There were in the same country shepherds, *abid-*

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ing in the field, watch over their flocks by night."

These were flocks of the desert, which were driven out for pasture about the time of the passover, which answers nearly to our March, and returned home at the first rains, which are said to begin on the third, or the seventh of the month Macheshvan, which corresponds to parts of our October and November. Even now, in the East, they drive their flocks into the deserts, or plain-fields, and there feed them through all the summer, watching them through the day and night. Our Lord was therefore probably born between the months of March and November.

If we consider what was the winter climate of Judea, it will appear still more improbable, that the birth of our Lord should have been on the 25th of December. "He giveth snow like wool," says the Psalmist; "He scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes; He casteth forth his ice like morsels; *who can stand before his cold.*"

Nor is it probable that Augustus would, at that season, have required all persons, women as well as men, to repair to their respective cities, to be taxed, or enrolled. That it was a time most inconvenient for travelling, may be inferred from the admonition which our Lord gave to his disciples, in predicting the destruction of Jerusalem, and the sufferings of the Jews, "pray that your flight be not *in the winter.*" William of Tyre, in speaking of Saladines' troops, after their defeat in the neighbourhood of Ascalon, says, that they *sunk under the cold, and the tediousness of the ways, and were not only taken prisoners every day, but sometimes threw themselves in the way of their enemies, rather than perish with cold and want.* And one of the Jewish rabbies mentions it as an instance of the clemency of God, that the destruction of the first temple occurred in the summer, and not in the winter.

The question, what was the exact date of the birth of Christ, is indeed of little importance. There is however much more evidence that it was in the summer, or autumn, than in the winter. But one emotion of sincere love of his character, or one act of obedience to his will, will advance us farther in his favor, than the knowledge of all mysteries, while our hearts are unrenewed by his instructions. [Lightfoot's Hor: Heb: on the ver. and on Matth. xxiv. 20. Jenning's Jew. Antq. v. 2. p. 240. Harmer's Observ. v. 1. 21, 22.

ON HUMILITY IN THE INVESTIGATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH.

To obtain as clear conceptions as possible of the truth, which Jesus Christ brought from heaven, is one of the first duties of a christian disciple. What teacher can be compared with Jesus? What an attestation did he receive from the infinite God, when there came

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to him this voice from the excellent glory, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased?" Can we prize too highly a religion, which fell from the lips, and was sealed by the blood of the Son of God? Can we search for its truths with too earnest and assiduous attention?

There are several qualities or dispositions, which are necessary or important to the acquisition of Christian truth. To illustrate and recommend these, will be a leading object in the Christian Disciple. One of these dispositions is humility, an excellent virtue, which cannot too frequently or too seriously be enjoined, as a preservative from error, and a guide to truth. But perhaps the true nature of this virtue has not been sufficiently explained. Perhaps it has not been sufficiently distinguished from counterfeits. A timid and abject spirit, at once unfavorable to truth and degrading to the character, has often been recommended as humility, and been cherished as a virtue on account of the honorable name which it has borne. In the following dissertation, I wish to consider what is intended by that humility, which we ought to carry with us into our inquiries after religion. And for the sake of greater clearness, I will begin with pointing out what this humility does *not* imply.

1. To search for truth with christian humility does not imply, that we consider ourselves incapable of judging for ourselves, and that we resign our understanding to the guidance of others. This is a humility, which aspiring and haughty men very naturally recommend, for it is the great foundation of spiritual dominion. But we ought to be just to ourselves and to the powers which God has given us. We ought to feel that we are rational and moral beings, bound to exert our faculties, and accountable for their improvement. We ought not indeed to overrate our capacities. We ought to see and to acknowledge the superiority of those who surpass us—But because our powers of mind are inferior to those with which others are gifted, are they unworthy of cultivation? Must we cease to exert them? Must we leave to others the task of thinking for us, and passively receive whatever they deliver as truth? Let us remember, that we are responsible only for the powers we possess, and that nothing is required of us, but to employ these with uprightness and assiduity. We are not expected to see as far as those who are blest with a more piercing vision; but as far as we *can* see, we are bound to look with our own eyes, and not to trust implicitly to the guidance of others.

There is one consideration, which should encourage common christians to examine the scriptures for themselves. The scriptures were designed for the great mass of mankind, and are in general adapted to their capacities. This we infer from the fact, that Jesus Christ addressed his instructions to the common people of a country, much less enlightened than our own. He did not repair to the schools of the learned, and entrust his truth to a few

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exalted minds, to be dispensed by them, in the form which they should think best, to the inferior classes of society. His school was in the open air, in the streets, in the fields. His hearers were the poor and ignorant, as well as the rich and learned. Unto the poor was the gospel preached. Who then will say, that persons of ordinary understanding are incapable of attaining, by the honest exercise of their faculties, to a sufficient acquaintance with the instructions of Jesus, as they are preserved and transmitted in the sacred scriptures? Why must they yield their understandings to others?

If indeed we were assured, that any human being was infallible, we might safely commit to him the keeping of our consciences. But where is this privileged mortal, whose understanding is a region of unclouded light, a temple of truth too holy for the entrance of a single error? Who will dare, in so many words, to claim this exemption from human frailty?

Some indeed talk with great boldness of the perfect assurance which they have attained, as to the truth of the most disputed doctrines. But who are these bold and confident men? Are they distinguished by the patience of their inquiries, the calmness of their minds, the deliberateness of their judgments, the humility and meekness of their tempers? Or are they the precipitate, ardent, vain, and ignorant?

Some men are sure, that they are right on points where the wisest have doubted, because light has flashed upon their minds from heaven. They carry *within* them an indescribable feeling, which assures them of the truth of their sentiments. They have received sudden, irresistible impressions, which are worth more than a thousand arguments. Are these the men we are prepared to follow?—Then there is no extravagance of sentiment or practice, which we must not embrace.—There is no absurdity of which some weak enthusiast has not felt the certainty.

Some men owe their confidence not so much to enthusiasm as to their ignorance. Perhaps nothing produces so much positiveness, as narrowness of views. No difficulties ever strike that mind, which looks only at one side of a question. No doubts disturb him, who will not inquire.

If then loud claims are not to be believed, how are we to choose the guide to whom we may resign our understanding? A thousand offer to conduct us to truth and heaven. Whom shall we follow? We must at least compare their different systems; and what is this but saying, that we must employ our own understandings on religion, that we must judge for ourselves?

Am I told by some of my readers, that they intend to take for their guides, not enthusiasts or the ignorant, but men of enlarged minds, more favored than themselves with the power and means of discovering truth? To this the answer is obvious:—If men of enlarged minds were united in their views of christian doctrines, the presumption would be strong in favor of their correctness. But who does not know, that on several subjects the

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wise are divided—that every age has teemed with the controversies of the learned—that great names are ranged under very different standards—that every sect can number among its advocates profound reasoners and laborious inquirers. The fact is, that the most vigorous minds are accessible to error, that the wisest men cannot escape all the prejudices of education, all the biases to which they are exposed from their connexions and pursuits. Great men are often very weak. Some are blinded by attachment to old opinions, which they began to defend, before they had examined them. Others are perverted by a passion for novelty, and by the proud hope of raising a name on the ruin of ancient systems. Before we attach authority to another man's opinions, we should not merely ask, is he intelligent and profound? we should inquire, how was he educated? where has he lived?—and especially we should inquire, whether his reputation or interest be not in some degree connected with the sentiments he defends. And after all, how poorly can we judge of the degree of impartiality with which the mind of another has conducted its inquiries after truth.

But some will say, that they choose for their guides, not the learned, but the most *pious* class of christians, and that they can hardly err in the company of saints. But, my friends, let me ask you, who has constituted *you* the judges of other men's piety? Are the hearts of men so easily searched, are the marks of goodness so obvious and undoubted, are false professors of piety so easily detected, that you feel no hesitation in deciding, to what denomination of christians the purest piety ought to be ascribed? For myself, I had much rather be the judge of doctrines than of characters. If you act upon the principle of making the most pious your spiritual guides, you will probably attach youselves to those, who make the loudest professions of religion. But are you sure, that you will find among these the profoundest humility and the tenderest love of God and Jesus Christ? Do those who make the longest prayers always wear the purest hearts? Suppose that you had lived in Judea in the time of our Saviour, and had determined to take the most eminent saints as your spiritual directors, what guides would you probably have followed? There was at that time a class of men, whose reputation for sanctity rang through the land. They fasted often; they prayed often; they were solemn in their manners; they were too holy to commune with ordinary people; they would not suffer the Sabbath to be broken even by an act of mercy; not the minutest forms and expressions were overlooked; they were filled with indignation at the deficiencies of others; they were unsparing in their censures; even Jesus Christ was a glutton, wine-bibber, and sabbath-breaker, when compared with the rigid rules of their sect; and their ears were too much shocked with the impiety of his sentiments, to permit them to hear him. How naturally would you have been led to take for your guides men so imposing in their appearance, who

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asserted so loudly their holy zeal, and of whom all around spoke in the language of veneration—and yet, what would these men have made of you? formal hypocrites, hard-hearted bigots, enemies of your Saviour. Under their guidance, you might have embrued your hands in his blood, and then have lifted them to God with a confident hope of his approbation.

I am far from applying this character of the Pharisees to any class of Christians. Whilst every denomination has its hypocrites, there is no one, I trust, which, as a body, is marked by hypocrisy. I only mean to say, that loud pretensions and fair appearances are not always to be trusted; that popular opinion may invest with peculiar sanctity the very sect, which is most unsound in faith and practice. The purest piety is modest, unobtrusive, retiring. It is often concealed, or only discloses itself to the eye of friendship. It is not ambitious of controlling the opinions of the world, and puts in no claim to obedience from the multitude. How then shall we be sure that the class of christians, whom we may select as our guides, are the purest who bear the christian name?

Another objection may be made to the principle of choosing the pious as our spiritual directors. If we look round on the christian world with candid and inquiring minds, we shall see marks of the purest piety in every denomination. Every church will exhibit to us its saints. It is a delightful thought, that religion is confined to none of those enclosures of sect and party, which are so often the limits of *our* narrow charity. As protestants, we shrink from the corruptions of the church of Rome. But what venerable sanctity has adorned many of its members? Who can pronounce the name of Fenelon without thinking better of human nature? Calvinism numbers among its disciples the fathers of New England, men of exalted piety, who breathed the spirit of the early martyrs. On the other hand, who can number the host of worthies, who have looked with a shuddering abhorrence on the doctrines of Calvin? Into what perplexities shall we be thrown, into what opposite paths shall we be attracted, if we choose to believe whatever the pious have believed?

Let us love and respect the good, but let us not lean upon them as if they could never fall into error. The best heart is not always guided by the most enlightened mind. Sometimes very conscientious men are weak and timid. They are alarmed by the denunciations of the positive, fear to inquire, and thus yield themselves slaves to gross superstitions. Sometimes very excellent men have more fancy than judgment. They delight in the marvellous, and find hidden meanings in the plainest language of scripture; they send their thoughts into the spiritual world, and mistake their vivid and pleasing dreams for divine communications. Where shall we not be led, what absurdity shall we not adopt, if every opinion is to be embraced which has found a place in the minds of the devout?

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Christians, let us be humble; but let us remember, that he, who commands us to be humble, also commands us to call no man our master. Let us, according to our capacities, try by the scriptures what others teach as christian truth; and let us receive nothing, which we do not clearly see to accord with that unerring standard. Let not strong assertion pass with us for argument. By trusting implicitly to the judgment of others, we expose ourselves to inexpressible hazard. We shall probably fall into the worst hands. Men of true humility and of patient inquiry will tremble to take on themselves the responsible office of dictating to us the articles of our faith. The bold, self-sufficient, and domineering will offer themselves as our guides, and impose their crude and extravagant conceptions on our yielding credulity. It is to this timid dependence on the superior wisdom and sanctity of others, that we owe the extension and duration of some of those monstrous systems, which have borne the name of Christianity. The multitude were awed into submission; were taught to consider religion as something too awful and mysterious to be examined by their narrow faculties; were menaced with the flames and endless torments of hell, if they should dare to resist the authority of their guides; and in this prostration of understanding, they acquiesced in sentiments, which common sense, could it have gained a hearing, would have rejected with instantaneous abhorrence and contempt.

I have extended my remarks on this head far beyond my original design. But I see at the present day so much of the false humility, which I have labored to expose, so much fear of man, so much submission of understanding to assertions and threats, that I cannot pass over this subject with indifference. I have witnessed extreme distress and alarm in very good people, because they have been unable to reconcile, with scripture or reason, certain doctrines, enforced upon them as essential to salvation by men, whose superior wisdom and sanctity they held it criminal to doubt. Great names are still employed to subdue and palsy the minds of christians. To the doubts of the sincere is opposed the authority of the holy and zealous of the present and past ages. A passive state of mind is thus induced. Those inquiries, which give vigor and activity to intellect, and which providence, by permitting diversity of opinion, designed to awaken, are put to rest. The traditions of the fathers are imposed on the children—and the errors, which have been consecrated in an age of darkness, become the inheritance of many succeeding generations.

[The subject will be continued in the next number.]

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EXTRACT FROM TENNANT'S INDIAN RECREATIONS.

[As the public attention has been called of late to Foreign Missions, we have thought, that an extract from Tennant's Indian recreations, giving an account of a Moravian Mission in the south of Africa, might not be unacceptable—and we offer it, as containing some useful reflections.]

"On the banks of *Zonder-End* river, near Bavian's Kloof,* in Southern Africa, three Moravian missionaries have gradually attracted to their society a number of the wandering and destitute Hottentots of that district. As their conduct has been successful, in every difficult and almost hopeless case, it forms a rule for the guidance of future missionaries, among the most savage of the Oriental tribes: they began by supplying their corporeal, before their intellectual wants.

"By gradually accustoming them to cleanliness and industry, they have succeeded in changing the natural habits of the Hottentots so completely, that they have now not only a relish for dress, but are enabled to subsist and clothe themselves by the produce of their own labor. They are already acquainted with many of the duties, and aspire to the comforts of rational beings; an effect that probably never could have been produced by holding to them vague and temporary harangues on speculative tenets, before their minds were rendered capable of comprehending them, by a previous education.

"The comforts enjoyed by this little society, have, on various occasions, drawn to it such accessions from the destitute savages of that neighbourhood, as have greatly increased its original number. During the short period of the British government in that part of Africa, it had amounted to above six hundred souls; new proselytes were however so frequently added, that the missionaries had found it expedient to send to Europe for a farther supply of instructers.

"At the period when Mr. Barrow passed through this district, his attention was drawn to this society while assembled in the open field on Sunday, for the purpose of performing divine service. A scene so novel in this part of Africa, and so different from what he had been accustomed to observe among this unhappy class of beings, at once gratified his feelings, and excited a lively curiosity regarding the nature of an establishment which could produce such beneficial effects.

"The three missionaries, from whom we learnt the particulars of this society, belong to a sect of Moravians, termed Hernhuters, from the name of a village in Saxony, which had afforded them an asylum, when driven from Moravia. "They were plain and decent in their dress," adds this traveller, "of modest manners, and intelligent in conversa-

* Bavian's Kloof, or *pass*, is seventy or eighty miles east from Cape Town, near the cape of Good Hope. It is situated inland on Zonder or Fonder-End river, a branch of Breed's river, which runs southeast into St. Sebastian or St. Catharine's Bay.

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tion." Although zealous in the cause of their mission, they were free from bigotry and enthusiasm.

"Around the different dwellings of these missionaries, and those of their flock also, every thing participated of that neatness and simplicity, which forms the strongest feature in their character: the church which they had built was a plain and neat edifice: their mill for grinding corn was superior to any in the whole colony: their gardens were also kept in good order, and produced abundance of vegetables for the supply of the table: almost every thing that had been done, was by the labor of their own hands; for, agreeably to the rules of the society of which they were members, each missionary had learned some useful profession. One was skilled in every branch of smith's work, the second was a school master, and the third a tailor.

"The six hundred proselytes, who had joined these teachers, were cantoned in a valley adjoining the river, and in huts, with a small portion of ground annexed to each, for the purpose of raising sustenance. The various stages of their improvement were still visible, and marked with exactness the length of time they had joined this community: the earliest converts were best clothed, cleanest, and most perfectly accommodated; a circumstance which afforded a pleasing demonstration that their improvement was gradual, and that the amelioration of their state was progressive, arising from a change both in their manners and industry. The condition of the greater part had already become preferable to that of the poor in some parts of England.

"The circumstance, which seems chiefly to have enabled these missionaries to overcome the indolence and filthy habits that distinguish the savage life, is, their first endeavouring to accustom the Hottentots to bodily labor and cleanliness, before proposing to their minds any abstract doctrines or theological tenets.

"A method, the very reverse of this, has frustrated the labors of by far the greater part of European missionaries, in almost every part of Asia: in the case now under review, every individual Hottentot, who chose to learn a trade, was immediately paid for his labor, as soon as he could earn wages. Some, in consequence of this, hired themselves for a limited time to the neighbouring peasants; some made mats and brooms for sale; others reared poultry; and not a few supported themselves and their families by their cattle and sheep. The greater part of the society was, by these means, enabled to purchase decent clothing; and to appear at church dressed in printed cottons, instead of the filthy habiliments which had invariably distinguished that tribe in their natural state, and which had conferred upon them a sort of pre-eminence in wretchedness and loathsome barbarity.

"These various improvements, thus effected among this tribe of Hottentots, are not to be considered as precarious or transient in

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their nature; for since they are gradual, and have proceeded upon rational principles, as well as a thorough conviction among the natives themselves of their utility, they have continued, and must continue in a state of gradual advancement. Every individual being at last fully persuaded that cleanliness is greatly conducive to his health and his comfort, he is willing to bestow any little money he can spare in purchasing clothes, instead of spirits and tobacco, which in his unreclaimed state, constituted the supreme objects of his desire, although they had occasioned the greater part of those evils and mischiefs which had embittered his condition.

"Such have been the effects of the judicious arrangements and instructions of the missionaries at Bavian's Kloof. That enthusiasm and fanatical spirit, which has so often characterised the Moravian sectaries in Europe, having found no place in this society, their discourses are there short, and replete with good sense and useful advice; and so far are they from making any ostentatious display of a large list of new converts to their persuasion, that they have ever been remarkably cautious in conferring either the name or privileges of their new profession upon any of the proselytes at an unseasonable period.

"Not more than sixty, of ten times that number of converts, had, at the period alluded to, been admitted members of the christian church, by the initiatory rite of baptism. Their conduct, in this respect, has also been as different from that of other missionaries in the East, as the consequences which have been the result of it. In that country it has been too common to publish at the different stations, and to transmit to Europe a pompous catalogue of converts to the christian church, not without strong suspicion of its magnitude being increased by the artifices of these converts themselves; the same persons presenting themselves at different places under feigned names.

"This successful example of the Moravians in Africa, which has thus been given in detail, on the authority of Mr. Barrow, is, in every particular, consistent with the personal knowledge of several English gentlemen, who were then upon the spot: But to such as are in any degree acquainted with the character of that writer, no additional testimony will be necessary to authenticate any fact, recorded in his volumes.

"As many important inferences are to be drawn from this conduct of the Moravians of Bavian's Kloof, they ought not to rest on a solitary example; the same lesson may be drawn from a thousand instances, as will appear in the sequel.

"1. We have to infer from it, first, as a rule for the guidance of future missionaries, that they ought to learn the more useful of the *mechanical trades*. The primary lesson, which savage man seems capable of receiving, is to labor with his hands; this nature seems to have ordained, as an early provision against cold, hunger, and other urgent wants.

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Even in the communicating of this instruction, the missionary must meet with many disappointments, and he ought to possess, along with mechanical skill, great patience, and much practical acquaintance with human character.

"2. As the individuals of foreign and independent tribes are free, and cannot be compelled to attend the instructions of their teachers, they can only be attached to them by motives of interest: every new lesson ought to be productive of some benefit: it ought either to convey a positive comfort, or remove some want. Hence the missionaries of rude and unreclaimed nations must be men of *active* and unwearied benevolence; they ought not, as heretofore, to be drawn from the haunts of the solitary and recluse; where the mind is too often soured by the acrimony of polemical doctrines, and where the students are generally unqualified by any acquaintance with those mechanical labors which must supply the primary wants of man.

"3. The missionaries must beware of magnifying the extent and importance of their own labors, by giving premature admission to their new converts into the rank and privileges of christianity. By a contrary method the natives will be too apt to disgrace its doctrines by the grossness of their conceptions, and will perhaps still oftener offend the purity of its precepts, by the immorality and extravagance of their conduct.

"4. The missionaries ought assiduously to apply to the instruction of the young; not merely in the elements of learning, as signifying the knowledge of letters, but in communicating habits of domestic industry and useful labor. For these purposes a course of discipline will be found more effectual than oral instruction.

"Fifthly, the missionary must 'shew his faith by his works.' His conduct must at all times prove an ornament, not a disgrace to his profession; for of all the human causes of the speedy diffusion of Christianity among the heathen nations, this has justly been regarded as the most powerful, namely, the upright and blameless life of its early professors.

"Should these rules of evangelizing rude nations be observed, and this mode of instruction, it will be attended with equally good effect among every savage people.

"For if the same happy fruits have not been reaped from missionary labors in India and among the other Oriental nations, it must be attributed to the neglect of these necessary means: it cannot assuredly be ascribed to any greater indocility in the natives, or to any superior difficulty of communicating instruction to the peaceable Hindoos. Notwithstanding the boasted permanency of their system, the great reformer, Nanuk, has converted the whole nation of the Seeks to a different faith.

"Our failure so often in these countries must have arisen from the adoption of a less judicious mode of instruction, from the promulgation of mysterious doctrines, previous to the communi-

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cation of knowledge sufficient either to appreciate their value or to comprehend their meaning.

"The same cause will, in a great measure, account for the small benefit or advantage which has hitherto been reaped from their new faith, by the converts themselves, whether in the knowledge of duty, or in the conduct of life. Neither the remnant of Portuguese christians in the East, nor the new proselytes to our faith from among the heathens, enjoy any superior reputation for integrity of conduct or respectability of character; nor are they in any respect more trust-worthy in the transaction of ordinary business. The Oriental convert, as we have hitherto seen his education conducted, on his admission into the church changes his name only; no additional information is conveyed to his understanding, nor any new motives afforded him for the practice of duty.

"In those circumstances, finding the ties of his former system, whatever they were, completely broken, a laxity of principle is to be apprehended, rather than a more rigid adherence to virtue. From such a conduct, on the part of the missionaries, and from such a plan of instruction, little benefit could be expected: yet the failure of it has occasioned this indolent and unphilosophical conclusion, that no effort of ours can improve the Oriental nations."

REVIEW.

I. *Observations on our Lord's conduct as a Divine Instructer: and on the excellence of his moral character. By William Newcome, D. D. Archbishop of Armagh.* Charlestown, Samuel Etheridge, jun. 1810. pp. 516, 8vo.

We do not expect to fulfil all the duties, and therefore lay no claim to the name or the honors of professed reviewers. In this age, when the number of books is so greatly multiplied, there would be great use, no doubt, in a work which should give a full and impartial account of their merits and defects. Those, which are truly valuable, might, in this way, be sooner brought into extensive circulation; and neither the money nor time of readers would be thrown away upon those, which are useless or bad. To perform this office well however requires a great deal of real learning, a very sound judgment, and no common share of christian candor. We have so often seen it done ill; reviews are so frequently made vehicles for disseminating personal and party animosities, prejudices, and jealousies; that we do not think, that we shall often trust ourselves to expose the demerits of those writers, with whose opinions we may not happen to agree. Our chief object will be, to give an account of the merits of such theological works, as fall in with the general design of the Christian Disciple, and whose circulation therefore we think it useful to attempt to promote. And,

We begin with a work of Arch-

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bishop Newcome, and propose to endeavour to aid those of our readers, who may not have seen it, in forming a judgment of its value. Its great object is, to assist the christian inquirer, in studying the doctrines of our Saviour in their native simplicity, as they fell from his own lips—to bring together the various traits of his character, as they appear in the different incidents of his life, scattered through the narration of the evangelists—to illustrate those evidences of his divine mission to which he himself appealed—to discuss the chief difficulties relating to the phraseology and to the subject matter of the gospel history—and, in one word, to make all that is to be found in the gospels familiar to the understandings of every reader. We do not know how we can better convey an idea of the advantage and necessity of the studies, which this book is designed to illustrate, than by an extract from the author's preface:—

"A diligent attention to our Lord's discourses and actions has been highly satisfactory and delightful to me. The life of Jesus is a most instructive, a most interesting, and a most important subject. The Deity, when we contemplate his discoveries of himself in the works of creation, cannot be sufficiently admired and adored. But in the gospels we see him, as it were, face to face; we seem to converse with him, as a man with his friend; and we behold his perfections as vividly represented in the person of Jesus Christ, as the limited capacity of human nature admits.

"It is my earnest wish and prayer, that, by a more general cultivation of biblical criticism, the lovers of the scriptures may better understand and more deeply admire them; and that those, who neglect a due examination of them, or who deny their authority, may be convinced of their importance, and may discover the signatures of truth stampt on them. My ardent love and admiration of these divine writings lead me to conclude, that they cannot be seriously and carefully read without pleasure and conviction. I lament, that they are impiously interdicted to a large body of Christians; that they are so much disregarded, and of course misunderstood, by the bulk of Protestants among ourselves; that many of our clergy, unmindful of the solemn engagement at their ordination, do not devote their time to the study of them; and that, while learning is making a rapid progress in its various branches, the religion of Christ is almost every where overwhelmed by human formularies and systems. Christianity can never have its free course among men of improved understandings, and even among rational creatures in general, while gross misrepresentations of it are substituted in the place of the simple and perfect original." pp. vii, viii.

The work is divided into two parts: and the first into three chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the consideration of the *matter of our Lord's instructions;* and displays successively all that our Lord teaches of God the Father—of his own nature and office—of the Holy Spirit—of his own manifestation in the flesh and of the ends for which he died—of the life to come and the general condition of the gospel covenant, &c. &c. This is done by collecting under each head every representation, which our Lord gives us, relating to these most interesting topics, with references in the margin to the chapter and verse of the Evangelists, where they are found. The difficult passages, as they occur, are carefully illustrated

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by a short paraphrase or commentary; and, when necessary, by a full discussion in the text or the notes.

The second chapter is occupied with considering the *manner, in which our Lord taught.* In this are given examples of the authority with which our Lord spake—of the restrictions which he sometimes gave to his precepts—of the reasons which he occasionally gave for them—of the beauties which occur in his discourses—of the occasions out of which his instructions frequently arose, and the familiar objects from which he drew his images, &c. &c. This chapter abounds in interesting and original remarks.

The third chapter contains the *proofs, which our Lord gave of his divine mission,* under the heads of his prophecies and his miracles. In the first section of this chapter there will be found, among other things, the most complete and best account, with which we are acquainted, of the fulfilment of the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, with a minute narrative of the circumstances of the siege and destruction of this celebrated city.

The first chapter of the second part is devoted to the consideration of illustrations, which the example of our Lord has given, of the various virtues and graces of a perfect character. The remarks are arranged under the divisions of his piety, his benevolence, his compassion, his justice, his temperance, his meekness, his humility, &c. No one can attentively meditate on this picture without wonder, delight, and improvement. We shall gratify our readers with an extract from the concluding section, which contains a recapitulation of his character.

"Never was a character at the same time so commanding and natural, so resplendent and pleasing, so amiable and venerable. There is peculiar contrast in it between an awful greatness, dignity, and majesty, and the most conciliating loveliness, tenderness, and softness. He now converses with prophets, lawgivers, and angels; and the next instant he meekly endures the dulness of his disciples, and the blasphemies and rage of the multitude. He now calls himself greater than Solomon, one who can command legions of angels, the Giver of life to whomsoever he pleaseth, the Son of God, who shall sit on his glorious throne to judge the world. At other times, we find him embracing young children, not lifting up his voice in the streets, not breaking the bruised reed, nor quenching the smoking flax; calling his disciples, not servants, but friends and brethren, and comforting them with an exuberant and parental affection. Let us pause an instant, and fill our minds with the idea of one who knew all things heavenly and earthly, searched and laid open the inmost recesses of the heart, rectified every prejudice and removed every mistake of a moral and religious kind, by a word exercised a sovereignty over all nature, penetrated the hidden events of futurity, gave promises of admission into a happy immortality, had the keys of life and death, claimed an union with the Father; and yet was pious, mild, gentle, humble, affable, social, benevolent, friendly, affectionate. Such a character is fairer than the morning star. Each separate virtue is made stronger by opposition and contrast; and the union of so many virtues forms a brightness which fitly represents the glory of that God 'who inhabiteth light inaccessible.'

"Such a character must have been a real one. There is something so extraordinary, so perfect, and so godlike in it, that it could not have been thus supported throughout by the ut-

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most stretch of human art, much less by men confessedly unlearned and obscure." pp. 484, 485.

The work is concluded by three short chapters on the testimony, which has been borne to our Lord's character by his enemies; on the manner in which the evangelists delineate his character; and proofs in his conduct that he was not an impostor.

We hope that the view of the design and the outline of the contents of this book, which we have thus given, will induce our readers to examine it for themselves. We can hardly name a work, which we think may be more profitably studied. We wish that it may find a place in every family library, and may be considered as part of at least the Sunday reading of every domestic circle. Of course we do not pledge ourselves for the perfect accuracy of every opinion of this or any other uninspired author; though we certainly think there are few writers on similar subjects, who may be read with more confidence in their fairness, learning, judgment, and piety. The reader will find nothing of the bitterness of controversy, and no attempts to strain the plain language of scripture to a conformity to preconceived metaphysical theories. If he study this book in the temper in which it is written, we feel confident, that he will find himself making advances both in charity and knowledge. The example and teachings of our Saviour can never be contemplated with attention, seriousness, and prayer, without producing a spirit of gentleness and meekness, of devotion and benevolence; without fitting us for the duties of life, and preparing us for the happiness of eternity.

ANECDOTES.

OF AN ITALIAN BISHOP.

THERE was an Italian Bishop, who had struggled through great difficulties without repining, and who met with much opposition in the discharge of his episcopal function, without ever betraying the least impatience. An intimate friend of his, who highly admired those virtues, which he thought it impossible to imitate, one day asked the prelate, if he could communicate the secret of being always easy. "Yes," replied the old man, "I can teach you my secret, and with great facility; it consists in nothing more than making a right use of my eyes." His friend begged him to explain himself. "Most willingly," returned the bishop. "In whatever state I am, I first of all *look up to heaven*, and remember that my principal business is to get there. I then *look down upon the earth*, and call to mind what a small space I shall occupy, when I come to be interred. I then *look abroad into the world*, and observe what multitudes are there, who are, in all respects, more unhappy than myself. Thus I learn where true happiness is placed; where all our cares must end; and how very little reason I have to repine or to complain."

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OF ONE OF THE UNITED BRETHREN.

In the last war in Germany, a captain of cavalry was ordered out on a foraging party. He put himself at the head of his troop, and marched to the quarter assigned him. It was a solitary valley, in which hardly any thing but woods could be seen. In the midst of it stood a little cottage; on perceiving it, he went up and knocked at the door; out comes an ancient Hernhuter (Moravian) with a beard silvered by age. "Father," says the officer, "shew me a field where I can set my troopers a-foraging."—"Presently," replied the Hernhuter. The old man walked before, and conducted them out of the valley. After a quarter of an hour's march, they found a fine field of barley. "There is the very thing we want," says the captain.—"Have patience for a few minutes," replies his guide, "you shall be satisfied." They went on, and at the distance of about a quarter of a league farther, they arrived at another field of barley. The troopers immediately dismounted, cut down the grain, trussed it up, and remounted. The officer upon this, says to his conductor—"Father, you have given yourself and us unnecessary trouble, the first field was much better than this."—"Very true, Sir," replied the good old man, "but it was not mine."

POETRY.

DIVINE LOVE.

FROM POEMS BY THE REV. HENRY MOORE.

My God, thy boundless love I praise;
How bright on high its glories blaze!
How sweetly bloom below!
It streams from thine eternal throne!
Through heaven its joys forever run,
And o'er the earth they flow.

'Tis love that paints the purple morn,
And bids the clouds, in air upborne,
Their genial drops distil;
In every vernal beam it glows,
And breathes in every gale that blows,
And glides in every rill.

It robes in cheerful green the ground,
And pours its flowery beauties round,
Whose sweets perfume the gale;
Its bounties richly spread the plain,
The blushing fruit, the golden grain,
And smile in every vale.

But in thy gospel see it shine
With grace and glories more divine,
Proclaiming sins forgiven;
There faith, bright cherub, points the way
To realms of everlasting day,
And opens all her heaven.

Then let the love that makes me blest,
With cheerful praise inspire my breast,
And ardent gratitude;
And all my thoughts and passions tend
To thee, my father and my friend,
My soul's eternal good.

Dart from thine own celestial flame
One vivid beam to warm my frame
With kindred energy;
Mark thine own image on my mind,
And teach me to be good and kind,
And love and bless like thee.

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RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF INTEMPERANCE.

A society with this designation has been recently established. Its object is "to suppress the too free use of ardent spirits, and its kindred vices, profaneness and gaming, and to encourage and promote temperance and general morality." With a view to this object, "the society recommend the institution of auxiliary societies in the different parts of the commonwealth."

"No person is eligible as a member, who is not of a fair moral reputation, nor shall any one be admitted as a member, unless nominated in open meeting and approved by the votes of two thirds of the members present at the time. Any person, thus nominated and approved, may become a member by subscribing the constitution, or announcing his acceptance of his election and paying two dollars for the use of the society. All clergymen in the commonwealth are considered as members, on their giving notice of their desire of becoming such, or subscribing the constitution; and they are exempted from the payment of two dollars, as above provided respecting other members."

NOTICE.

On Thursday, the 27th of May, inst. a sermon will be delivered in Brattle street church, at eleven o'clock, A.M. before the Convention of Congregational ministers, by the Rev. JOHN T. KIRKLAND, D. D. L L. D. President of Harvard University. After sermon there will be a contribution for the relief of the poor widows of Congregational ministers.

Among the multiplicity of objects, which are continually soliciting the aid of the charitable, this, it is hoped, will not be deemed of inferior moment.

Owing to the small salaries of clergymen, particularly in country towns, many of their widows are left in circumstances peculiarly indigent. It is true, that they sometimes have connexions, who afford them all necessary aid; and some of them have the happiness to live in parishes, where they find friends, who act the same benevolent part. But it too commonly happens, that, at the death of a minister, the care of the society to provide for his family entirely ceases. To afford assistance to widows, under such circumstances, is well worthy the attention of the christian public, and of our Capital in particular, long renowned for deeds of munificence, the best evidences of "religion pure and undefiled."

That the liberally disposed may bestow their charities without fear of misapplication, it may be well to inform them, that every widow, who receives any portion of the contribution, is put on the list by express vote of the Convention; that twenty one were on this list the last year; and that whatever is contributed on the day of Convention, unless otherwise appropriated by the donors, goes to the immediate relief of these objects of charity.

Candidates for the Ministry in Boston and its vicinity.

Rev. Mr. Leonard, Boston.
Mr. William Popkin, Malden.
Mr. Samuel Sewall, Cambridge.
Mr. John L. Abbot, do.
Mr. John White, do.
Mr. Isaac Hurd, Charlestown.
Mr. Francis Parkman, Boston.
Mr. Charles Eliot, do.
Mr. Joseph Field, jun. do.
Mr. Thomas B. Gannett, Cambridge.
Mr. Lemuel Capen, Dorchester.

☞ Several articles of Religious Intelligence, prepared for this number, are omitted for want of room.

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THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

No. 2. *JUNE*, 1813. Vol. I.

THE OBLIGATIONS OF CHRISTIANS TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

A true christian, is one who cordially and practically acknowledges the Lord Jesus as *his* Lord and Master.

Without cordial obedience, the most correct opinions, and the most solemn professions will entitle us to nothing better than a name to live, while we are dead. Could we speak with the tongues of men or even of angels, if we have not charity, or christian love, we are no better than sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Such is the nature of that love, without which we are nothing; and the *want* of which can never be supplied by the greatest share of mental endowments, or the highest claims to orthodox opinions. On the contrary, if we possess this love, no defect of knowledge, no error of sentiment, can "separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." As *without* love we are nothing, so *with it*, all things are ours, for "we are Christ's and Christ is God's."

In his affectionate discourse to his disciples, the evening before his crucifixion, our Saviour, in the most particular and impressive manner, urged his disciples to "love one another." We may conceive, that it was indeed of special importance, that the apostles should love one another. Their success, as the apostles of Christ, greatly depended on this. It was highly important, also, as it respected their own comfort in this world, and their happiness in the world to come. The same love, one to another, is important for all the ministers of the gospel, and for all the professed friends of Christ; in every age of the world. We may, therefore, attend to the language of Christ to his disciples, with application to ourselves.

"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall

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ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."—"This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."—"These things I command you, that ye love one another."—"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

Such were the dying counsels and commands of our Saviour to his disciples. May we not hence safely infer, that love, one to another, is of vast importance to his followers? As we cannot, at this time, illustrate all we have quoted, let us fix our attention on one particular:—"*This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.*"

It behoves us here to observe, that love one to another is not merely recommended, as a matter of prudence, but solemnly commanded, as an indispensable duty. Not only so, the love of Christ to his disciples is made the standard of their love to each other—*that ye love one another, as I have loved you.*

The love of Christ to his disciples was sincere, impartial, tender, faithful, fervent, forbearing, and forgiving. Such should be the love of christians one to another. All these qualities of the love of Christ are worthy of illustration. One of them, however, will at this time be more particularly considered:—His love to his disciples was of a *forbearing* nature.

Had there been no imperfection in them, there would have been no opportunity for him to display towards them the spirit of forbearance. But they were imperfect creatures, they were bewildered by their prejudices and entertained some very erroneous opinions. By misinterpreting the prophecies, and probably by traditions received from their fathers, the Jews expected, that their Messiah would be a glorious temporal Prince; that he would literally sit on the throne of David, and reign as king of the Jews; that he would deliver them from their subjection to the Romans, and exalt the nation to independence, happiness, and glory. During the time of our Saviour's ministry, such were the expectations, both of the *believing* and the *unbelieving* Jews. It does not appear, that the believing and unbelieving Jews were divided in sentiment respecting the *object* of the Messiah's mission, or the nature of his kingdom; but they were divided on the question, whether JESUS were the promised Messiah. The apostles themselves appear to have entertained the same opinions respecting the object of the coming of the Messiah, which were entertained by the Jews in general, until sometime after the resurrection of their Lord from the dead. Under the influence of these errors, they "disputed among themselves, which should be the greatest;" that is, which should be prime minister of state,

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under the reign of the Messiah. With the same false opinions the mother of Zebedee's children requested of Jesus, that one of her sons might sit on his right hand and the other on his left, in his kingdom. In this request James and John concurred. With the same views the two disciples, on their way to Emmaus, after the resurrection, said to Jesus, not knowing who he was, "We trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel." In his last interview with his disciples after his resurrection, they put this question—"Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Their hopes, that he would deliver the Jews from the power of the Romans, were confounded, or suspended, by the event of his death; but they were revived on seeing him alive after his resurrection. Hence they were led to interrogate—"Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"

Such were the *errors* of the apostles; and thus did they *continue* in error under the ministry of the Son of God. They believed in him as God's Prophet, as God's Ambassador, as God's Messiah, as God's Son; as such they loved him, honored him, trusted in him, hearkened to his instructions, and obeyed his commands. This love, faith, and obedience, secured to them the character of disciples, notwithstanding the enormous errors they entertained: Errors so great, that if any professed christians should advance them, at this day, their sentiments would probably be denominated "*damnable heresies*," and the persons professing them, would be treated as infidels. However sincere they might be in their profession, however pious, benevolent, and exemplary in their walk, yea, however much they might display the meek and lowly temper of Jesus, they would be rejected, we fear, by multitudes, as the enemies of Christ.

Yet such, in fact, were the *errors* of the apostles of Jesus, until the very moment he was taken up into heaven, "and a cloud received him out of their sight." Nor was he unacquainted with their erroneous opinions. How then did he treat these disciples, while they were so blinded by their prepossessions, and in such a degree under the dominion of error? Did he cast them off, exclude them from his fellowship, and brand them with infamy? Or did he exercise towards them a sincere, tender, and forbearing love? Let his evangelists answer these questions.

One of them relates that on a certain time Jesus asked his disciples—"What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way? But they held their peace; for by the way they had disputed, which should be the greatest. And he sat down and called the twelve, and said to them—If any man desire to be first, the same shall be servant of all. And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: And when he had taken him into his arms, he said unto them—whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name receiveth me; and whosoever receiveth me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me." Thus with a

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mixture of kindness and faithfulness, he instructed them to be humble, and reproved them for their ambition.

On another occasion James and John presented their request, that they might have the two highest offices, in his power to bestow. The words after "but" —*it shall be given to them*, in the common translation, are not in the original; and they change the sense of the passage. Christ did not deny his having a right to give these places to those for whom they were prepared by his Father. "Jesus said unto them, ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They said unto him, we are able. And he said unto them, ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but for whom it is prepared of my Father." The other disciples, on hearing this request, "were moved with indignation against the two brethren." This indignation of the ten probably arose from something in themselves of the very ambition which had been manifested by James and John in presenting their request. A contention was thus likely to arise among the disciples from unjustifiable desires of preferment, and from mistakes about the nature of Christ's kingdom. Our Saviour then interposed, "called them to him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great, exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Thus, again, he taught them to be humble, and to suppress all desires of *dominion* one over another. These admonitory instructions, probably, put an end for that time to the dispute between his disciples; and we should suppose, that he very clearly distinguished between the nature of his kingdom, and the kingdoms of this world; but it does not appear, that his disciples fully apprehended his meaning, or gave up their expectations of a secular kingdom. Yet Jesus continued his fellowship with them, as his friends and disciples; and continued to instruct and to employ them. Having loved his own, he loved them to the end of his ministry. The very evening before his death, he ate the passover with them as his disciples, instituted for their observance the memorial of his death, and condescended to wash their feet, as an example of the humility and kindness which they were to exercise one towards another. At the same time, he said unto them, "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto

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you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord; neither is he that is sent, greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

After this, he discoursed with them in the most tender manner, and endeavoured to comfort and fortify their minds respecting the approaching events. He assured them of the expediency of his going away, gave them the promise of "the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit," and enjoined it on them to show their friendship to him by obedience to his commands, and by love one to another.

Having finished his discourse, he "lifted up his eyes to heaven," and in the most fervent manner prayed for them, that they might be "one, even as he and the Father are one." At the same time he prayed, that such might be the case with all who should believe on him through the instrumentality of their preaching.

We should remember, that during all the time of this display of love and fellowship, on the part of Christ towards his apostles, they entertained *gross errors in sentiment;* for, after this, they manifested, that they had not been cured of their prejudices in favor of a temporal kingdom.

In our common translation, there is something which has the appearance of bitterness in the answer of Jesus to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, after they had said—"We trusted that it had been he who should have redeemed Israel." Jesus is represented as replying, "O fools and slow of heart, &c." I shall, therefore, give his answer according to the translation of Dr. Campbell. Then he said to them, "O thoughtless men, and backward to believe things, which have all been predicted by the prophets! Ought not the Messiah thus to suffer, and so to enter into his glory? Then beginning with Moses, and proceeding through all the prophets, he explained to them all the passages relating to himself."

His answer implied *reproof;* but such language, uttered with that affectionate temper, which characterized our Saviour's reproofs, was not calculated to offend any person of a humble mind. While he faithfully reproved, he gave them the kindest instructions, "opened to them the Scriptures" in a manner calculated to convince them of error, and to remove their unbelief.

Just before his ascension, when his disciples were together, "they asked him, saying, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel." At this time, also, his reply implied *reproof;* and likewise a gracious promise for their encouragement. "He said unto them, it is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power; but ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses for me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight."

Thus ended the interviews be-

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tween Jesus and his apostles. For wise reasons, no doubt, he left them in error on some points of great importance. One reason might be this, that in his conduct towards them, we might have a more striking example of that *forbearing love*, which we are bound to exercise one towards another.

From the brief history we have had of the forbearing nature of Christ's love to his erring disciples, we may, in some measure, discover the force and extent of his command, "that ye love one another, as I have loved you." That we may love one another as he loved his disciples, our love must not be confined to those, who agree with us in opinion. When our love is thus circumscribed, what is it better than *party affection?* Where is the resemblance between our love and the love of Christ? And what is such love better than that love of "publicans and sinners," which Christ condemned.

Had there been no diversity of opinion betwen Christ and his disciples, how much less striking would have been the evidence of his love to them! We may here see, that by the diversity of opinion among the professed friends of Christ, they all have opportunity for the *trial* of their love; to see whether they love one another, as Christ loved his disciples. If our love be not of a nature to bear this *test*, on what ground can we hope for the approbation of our Lord and Judge? Will he accept of our hatred, or bitterness, towards one another, as equivalent to the love which he has required? May we expect his approbation of such bitterness because it appears under the pretext of love to him? If his love to himself and to his Father did not lead him to exclude from his fellowship his erring disciples, how can we imagine that *true love* to him will lead *us* to treat our erring brethren in a manner directly contrary to his example? Let it now be supposed, that during the ministry of Christ, some of his apostles had made greater proficiency than others; that some of them had been cured of their prepossessions in respect to the object of the Messiah's mission, and the nature of his kingdom; and that others still retained those erroneous opinions: Let it also be supposed, that Christ continued his fellowship with both classes, the strong and the weak; but, that the disciples themselves, on account of their different opinions, fell out by the way, and one part excluded the other from fellowship, and treated them as unworthy of the name of disciples. What a contrast would *their* conduct have been to the forbearing example of their Lord and Master?

If the command of Christ, which has been more particularly considered, be as binding on professors, at this day, as it was on the apostles, to whom it was addressed; and if love one to another be still a criterion, by which the real disciples of Jesus are to be distinguished and known; it is surely a question of the most serious moment to all professors of the present time, whether it does appear to the world, that they are the real disciples of Jesus. To be consistent with ourselves

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in urging the spirit of forbearance, we shall forbear to apply this subject to any particular sects of Christians. We have no doubt that great deficiency is to be found in every sect, in relation to the duty we have endeavoured to enforce. It is not our wish to wound the feelings of any, by making uncharitable distinctions. The reproofs of our Lord were all tempered with love. Such should be the case with all the reproofs of his disciples one to another. The censure implied in the illustration of the subject before us, we hope to regard, so far as it may be applicable to ourselves; and we pray, that such may be the case with each of our readers. To all of them, who may attend impartially to the subject, we think it will be evident, that there has been a lamentable deficiency among the professed disciples of Jesus; and, that a thorough reformation, in this particular, would give a new aspect to christianity in our land, and greatly conduce to the happiness of individuals, to the peace of society, to the general welfare of Zion, to the honor of our Saviour, and to the glory of God, the Father.

EXTRACT FROM THE LIFE OF DR. DODDRIDGE.

[The attention of our readers is respectfully called to an extract from the life of Dr. Doddridge by Orton. We shall be gratified, if this extract shall lead any to peruse the whole of that interesting work. The character of Dr. Doddridge was one of the happiest exemplifications of the spirit of Christianity. His piety was zealous, fervent, active, unwearied in labor for the honor of God and the salvation of mankind. But his zeal had no violence, no asperity. It was tempered by the gentlest and kindest feelings. The following extract will show the temper, which he maintained towards those, who differed from him in opinion. May we imbibe his peaceful and heavenly spirit.]

"Dr. Doddridge had diligently studied the gospel, and had just ideas of the extent and importance of christian liberty. He had impartially examined the controversy between the established church of England, and the Protestant dissenters, and thought it his duty to adhere to the latter."

"But his generous heart never confined truth and goodness to one particular sect, nor in any other respect appeared bigotted to that, or uncharitable to those, who differed from him."

"He behaved with the utmost candor to the members of the established church. 'I would be far,' saith he, 'from confining all true religion to the members of our own congregations. I am very well aware, that there are a multitude of excellent persons in the establishment, both among the clergy and laity, who, in their different stations, are burning and shining lights; such as reflect a glory on the human nature and the christian profession.' He always spoke of the established religion of our country with respect. In explaining those texts of scripture in his Family

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Expositor, in which he could not avoid showing his sentiments in some points of discipline, different from those which generally prevail, he conscientiously abstained from all reproaches; 'to which indeed,' saith he, 'I am on no occasion inclined, and which I should esteem peculiarly indecent, where the religious establishment of my country is in question; and above all, where a body of men would be affected, many of whom have been, and are, among the ablest advocates and brightest ornaments of christianity. I have been also careful to adjust my Expressions with as much tenderness and respect, as integrity and that reverence, which an honest man would owe to the judgment of his own conscience, were it more singular than mine, would admit.'—He never made any petulant objections against the worship or discipline of the church of England, nor uttered any severe or unkind reflections upon it. Indeed he very seldom mentioned the grounds of the difference between it and the dissenters in the pulpit; and when his subject naturally led him to it, he took occasion to show, how small the things in debate were, compared with those important principles and truths, in which they agreed. —He always spoke in the most respectful terms of the worthy clergy of the established church; thought himself happy in the intimate friendship of some of them, and kept up a friendly correspondence with others, even with some of the highest rank in it. Upon the same principles, he rejoiced, when he had opportunity, as he sometimes had, of serving any of them in their secular or ministerial interests. —He deeply lamented, that a separation from the communion of that church was, in his apprehension and that of many other good men, made so necessary. He heartily wished and prayed for a greater union among protestants; and longed for the happy time, when, to use his own words, 'the question would be, not how much may we lawfully impose, and how much may we lawfully dispute? but on the one side, what may we wave, and on the other, what may we acquiesce in, from a principle of mutual tenderness and respect, without displeasing our common Lord, and injuring that great cause of original christianity, which he hath appointed us to guard.' Having mentioned to one of his friends a candid letter he had received from a bishop, he adds—'O that God would open a way to a stricter union among protestants of every denomination! But the darkness of our minds, the narrowness of our hearts, and our attachment to private interest make it, I fear in a great measure, impracticable.'—'I greatly rejoice,' saith he on another occasion, 'when I see in those, whom, upon other accounts, I most highly esteem, as the excellent of the earth, that their prejudices against their brethren of any denomination are subdued, as mine against the writers of the establishment early were, and that we are coming nearer to the harmony, in which I hope we shall ever be one in Christ Jesus.'

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"He illustrates and confirms his thoughts and hopes on this head, by the words of a familiar letter he had received, from a worthy member of the church of England, well known in the learned world. 'I am glad,' saith his correspondent, 'that christianity begins so well to be understood and taught by so many men of parts and learning in all sects; the fruits of which appear in a candor and charity, unknown to all ages of the church, except the primitive, I had almost said, the apostolic age. Doth not this give you a prospect, though perhaps still very distant, of the completion of the famous propheey, that speaks of the lion and lamb lying down together in the kingdom of the Messiah? Lions there have been in all churches; but too many fierce, greedy, and blood thirsty lions, though often disguised like lambs; and some lambs there have been, simple enough to think it expedient for the flock to assume the habit and terror of lions. But I hope they now begin to undeceive themselves, and to consider christianity, as intended to bring back the world to that state of innocence, which it enjoyed before the fall. To attain this happy state, all christians should unite their amiable endeavours: and instead of looking out for, and insisting upon points of difference and distinction, seek for those only, in which they do or may agree. They may at least sow the seeds of peace and unity, though they should not live to reap the fruit of it in this world. Blessed are the peace-makers, saith the prince of peace, for they shall be called the children of God: an appellation infinitely more honourable than that of Pastor, Bishop, Archbishop, Patriarch, Cardinal, or Pope; and attended with a recompense infinitely surpassing the richest revenues of the highest ecclesiastical dignities.' 'I join,' adds the Doctor, 'my hearty wish and prayer, with those of my much esteemed friend, that we all more and more deserve this character, and attain its reward.' I am persuaded, that nothing ever appeared, in his lectures, correspondence, or private discourse, inconsistent with these sentiments, which he hath publicly avowed; especially in his Sermon on christian candor and unanimity. He labored to promote a like candid and friendly spirit in his pupils. He exhorted them to treat their brethren of the establishment with respect; never to utter any invectives against the constitution or forms of the Church of England; and if Providence should fix them near humble, peaceable, pious clergymen, to honor and love them, to cultivate a friendship with them, to study to serve them and promote their reputation and interest. These were the advices of the Lecture room: and I have the pleasure to know, that those of his pupils, with whom I am acquainted, have acted upon these catholic instructions, and been remarkable for their candor and moderation in consequence of the pains he took, by his instructions and example, to instil these virtues into them, and his laying before

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them the arguments on both sides of contested questions.

"Whoever considers how numerous the protestant dissenters in this kingdom are; that they claim a liberty of choosing their own ministers, of judging for themselves of the sense of scripture, and what rites and modes of worship that enjoins; and where there is no particular rule, of determining for themselves what is most subservient to christian edification; whoever considers this, will not wonder that there have been, and are, different sentiments among them; that they are ranged under different denominations, and that there are sometimes divisions and contentions among them. These Dr. Doddridge saw and lamented; and was as careful, as he could be, consistently with keeping a good conscience, to be upon friendly terms with them all, to shew a candid temper to those of a different persuasion, and promote the like in them. 'He was very little inclined to contend about technical phrases of human invention, which have, with equal frailty, been idolized by some and anathematized by others.' A rigid spirit, and a stiffness about indifferent things, he very much disliked, especially when attended with uncharitableness. He thought 'there was always reason to suspect those persons and principles, that would alienate our hearts from any of the faithful servants of Christ, because they do not agree with our sentiments about the circumstantials of religion; and that Christians had great need to be cautious, lest they abuse their liberty to gratify those irregular passions, which, to whatever high original they may pretend, were indeed to be traced no higher than a carnal principle, and to be numbered among the works of the flesh.' It grieved him to see impositions upon conscience any where; especially among dissenters, as they were so evidently contrary to their own principles. 'Our interest,' saith he, 'hath received great damage by unscriptural impositions and uncharitable contentions with each other.' It appears from what was said above of his behaviour to his pupils, that he thought it unjust in itself, and very injurious to the interests of religion, to be rigorous with young ministers and students about their particular sentiments, and to tie them down to profess their assent to formularies, containing points of a very abstruse or a very doubtful nature: He thought it also foolish in the imposers, as being likely to prejudice them against those points, and drive them into the opposite, and perhaps worse, extreme. When therefore the Author of *Christianity not founded on argument* had derived this practice, he left others to defend it, who were chargeable with it, or approved it. It was an inviolable maxim with him, 'never to condemn his brethren as having forfeited all title to the name of Christians, because their creeds or confessions of faith did not come up to the standard of his own; yea, he thought that if it were a matter that seemed of so great importance, as to give some reason to suspect, that the mistake was

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fatal (which surely nothing can be, which does not greatly affect men's tempers towards God and each other), even that consideration should engage us to gentleness and tenderness, rather than severity, if peradventure we may remove their prejudices.

To the Editors of the Christian Disciple.

Gentlemen,

Every periodical publication, with which I have been acquainted, has been fair in promise. Yours, I hope, will be among the very few, which have not disappointed expectation.

Permit me to observe, that I am much pleased with the title which you have chosen. If I understand your object in the selection of this name, and if this object should be accomplished, it will give a charm to your book, which, if it do not increase the number of its readers, will be most salutary upon the hearts of all who shall resort to it for instruction. I suppose the name to be designed to indicate *the spirit* of the book, to which it invites our notice; the intention of its editors to give to their readers a work, in reading which they will feel the same emotions, the same affections, which would be excited and exercised by familiar intercourse with a disciple, whose dispositions, affections, and objects were all modeled by the instructions and the example of our benevolent and holy Master. You intend, I hope, to shew us what a "christian disciple" should be; to exhibit and to inculcate at once the principles and the temper which was in Christ. You have my hearty prayers, that God may speed so good a purpose; and if you do not loose sight of it, I am confident that he will not withhold his blessing.

I need not suggest to you, Gentlemen, that much knowledge of the scriptures may be possessed by men, who appear to be scarcely less strangers to the spirit of our religion, than if it had not inculcated meekness, and candor, and forbearance, and love. Much, I am sorry to believe, is also possessed by some, of whom I hope that it is not uncandid to say, that their want of *seriousness* is not only a very great defect in their own characters, but perhaps one of the most important causes, why their endeavours to extend christian knowledge have so little influence. While therefore I look to the pages of the Christian Disciple for valuable information; while I anticipate in it a book to which I may direct those who inquire of me, where they may find, in the cheapest form and the shortest compass, the knowledge which they would obtain concerning the different books, and the doctrines of the scriptures; I am particularly desirous of seeing in it an *exemplification* of that *seriousness*, which is certainly a constituent part of a christian character, and of that *charity*, which "vaunteth not itself, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, and thinketh no

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evil." Knowledge, conveyed with this spirit, will descend from the head into the heart, where it will gradually obtain authority over the will and passions, and bring them into subjection to the principles of christian piety and virtue. It is the want of this spirit, I believe, more than any other external cause, which has made so many books, otherwise most valuable, to be of so little efficacy.

We are accustomed to use the word *seriousness*, as we do many others, with a latitude of meaning, which renders its definition of some importance, when we employ it with such an emphasis, and attribute the prevention of so much good to the want of it; and some will think perhaps, that even in the service of religion, it has been so often misunderstood by some, and used only as a cloak of hypocrisy by others, that on these accounts also it is not less necessary, that its objects and operations should be clearly marked, and its limitations prescribed. Indulge me then for a moment, while I attempt to express my sentiments more fully upon the subject.

By seriousness, I certainly do not mean either the gloom of despondence, or merely a solemnity of countenance and of manners, assumed as occasion requires, and employed only to obtain a reputation of more than ordinary piety and virtue. But I mean that feeling, or *that disposition of the mind, which is produced by a deep sense of the importance and obligations of religious truth, and which is nourished and supported by a faithful application of principles to our own practice.* Equally remote from levity, which implies either thoughtlessness, or indifference; from artifice, which would be thought to be undisguised, even while it most cautiously seeks concealment; and from melancholy, which is induced by erroneous views of religion, or by dwelling with too much intenseness on some of its subjects, to the exclusion of others; seriousness is a disposition of the mind, at once considerate, and tranquil; unostentatious, but sincere; consistent with every innocent enjoyment, but averse from every indulgence, the pleasure of which would be interrupted by a remembrance of accountability. Or it may be considered as that *preparation* of the mind for the contemplation, or the discussion of religious truth, and the performance of its duties, which becomes a creature, living constantly under the eye of God, accountable to him, and destined to immortality. It will indeed affect the manners of men, and their modes of conversation; but it will neither give a stiff and formal air to address, nor a dull, and cold, and repulsive character to their sentiments, or their expressions. It neither partakes of depression, nor is adapted to excite it. It has none of the uncharitableness of bigotry, or of the untempered zeal of fanaticism.

Every man must and will be serious, who deliberately considers, that the rules of religion and virtue are the principles, by which he will be judged, and his eternal condition decided. But the momentary disposition which

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most men occasionally feel, to a more than usual thoughtfulness upon religious subjects, is very far short of the seriousness which religion demands. To be worthy of a place among the qualities of a christian character, it must be a habit of the mind. This sense of the importance of religion will make us equally inquisitive to know the truth, and cautious to escape error; equally attached to sentiments obtained by gradual and progressive conviction, and candid in judging the sentiments of others. It will make us earnest in the pursuit of every object, in proportion to the relation which it bears to our own, and to the religious and moral good of others; and as it is induced by practical views of religion, so it is adapted, in turn, to secure the practical influence of every principle which it embraces This is the disposition which I wish that you could assist me to exercise; and the excitement of which in others, I deem of far more importance, than the discussion of disputed texts, or the most ingenious defences of any contested doctrines.

So far as my own information extends, there is a great want of this seriousness in many of the professors, in every denomination of christianity; and the charge, though I think very unjustly, has been made particularly against those, who are called "liberal christians." If the want of seriousness be particularly applicable to liberal christians, the cause is to be sought elsewhere, than in a want of principles which are adapted to make men serious. The doctrines of the *moral government* of God, and of *human accountability*, applied as rules of life, will alone produce a far deeper reverence of God, and a far more solemn consideration of our conduct, than it has been my happiness to witness, at least in many, even of those in whom no one would complain of a deficiency of faith. But I feel far less solicitude to attempt a vindication against this charge, than I have to see men affected, as they should be, by sentiments which they profess to receive, as instructions from God, and rules by which they expect to be judged. That christianity has little influence, compared with what it should have, upon the tempers and lives of men—that there is great coldness and indifference upon the greatest subjects which can engage human attention, is a truth which all who reflect will acknowledge, and all who think seriously will deplore. Most earnestly do I hope that the Christian Disciple will be a favored instrument of "rousing professors from their slumbers; of breathing into them a spirit of mild, but earnest devotion; of opening at once their understandings and their hearts to the excellence, the goodness, and the authority of God, and of the love of Jesus Christ, who shed his blood for their redemption."

The importance of a charitable and conciliating spirit to the union, order, and happiness of our churches, and to the advancement of religion in the hearts of men, is comparatively unfelt in places like our metropolis, where every man, without inconvenience, may choose his place of

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worship, and find a large number, with whom he may associate, who think almost precisely like himself. But in the country, and especially in towns not large enough for division into two or three societies, without exposure to all the dangers of anarchy and contention, a bigoted and uncharitable mind in a few individuals, produces the most unhappy consequences. Here then is likewise a wide sphere for your exertions. You may not be able, in many instances, by courses of argument, to correct erroneous sentiments. But you will do much, very much for the cause of the gospel, by inculcating and exhibiting the temper, with which christians, who differ in opinion, should converse on the subjects of their differences; by marking out that common ground, on which they may meet with the purest love, and unite in the worship of God. The differences of christians in common life are much less in number, and when they can be brought to mutual and friendly explanations, of much less importance, than are those which divide men who are fond of speculation, and whose object it is to build their own, upon the destruction of the systems of others. Shew them their differences and their points of union, without exciting at the same time the party spirit which they are too much accustomed to indulge, and I am persuaded that your efforts, if they sometimes fail, will often be rewarded with success.

I shall wait, Gentlemen, with some impatience, for your work. If its spirit accord with my anticipations, and with its promises, I shall hail it as a harbinger of great good. From my heart, I wish grace, mercy, and peace to all men; and for myself, I wish nothing greater in this world, than tobe indeed and in truth a Christian Disciple.

EXTRACT FROM DR. PRICE'S DISSERTATION ON PRAYER.

The following extract from Dr. Price's excellent dissertation on prayer is offered to our readers, not only on account of its intrinsic merit, but as it is a valuable and unsuspicious testimony to the reality and happiness of a devout character. There are persons, who, when they hear of the pleasure of communion with God, pronounce it at once delusion, or enthusiasm, or hypocrisy—But Dr. Price is too well known to be exposed to these inconsiderate reproaches. He was a man of a vigorous, cultivated, and philosophic mind; composed, and mild, and steady in his feelings; and singularly humble, unostentatious, and sincere in his temper and manners—He was one of the last men to make a show of piety, to affect a fervor which he did not feel, to boast of a happiness to which he was a stranger. Let the following extract be read, as the language of an upright and enlightened mind—and let us learn from it the elevated piety of which our nature is capable, which is the highest end of our being, and the purest felicity we can attain in this world, or in the world to come.

"I WOULD recommend this duty from the consideration of the pleasures that attend the due discharge of it. Prayer, as has been before observed, is the ex-

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ercise of our highest affections on their highest object, and the intercourse of our minds with uncreated and sovereign goodness. It must therefore be the foundation of the highest pleasure. What delight does a virtuous man often feel when he puts himself solemnly into the presence of his Maker, and considers him as one with his soul and as observing every motion within it; when he implores all suitable blessings from him with a lively faith in his readiness to give him more than he can ask or think; when he adores his inconceivable excellencies, and magnifies and blesses that love which gave being to the world; when he commits his whole existence to him with boundless hope, and gives full scope to every pious and grateful affection? What rapture and ravishment attend such exercises, and how high do they lift our souls?—Words are indeed wanting here; nor is it possible properly to describe the pleasure there is in all the acts of devotion; in addressing our desires, with a pure heart to our almighty Parent; in praising him for his innumerable benefits; in beseeching him to cause us to grow in every amiable disposition; in interceding with him for those we love; in feeling benevolence, gratitude and hope kindling within us before his eye; in spreading our wants and perplexities before him, and seeking direction and help from him; in throwing our cares and burdens upon him, and referring ourselves to his disposal, so as not to retain any wish of any thing which he is pleased to forbid or deny. Even the tears of penitential sorrow and contrition, or of sympathy and benevolence, into which a devout person may sometimes be melted, have a sweetness in them not to be expressed, and are more to be desired than the greatest joys of the irreligious.—Am I, reader, now talking to you a language you do not understand? Have you never felt any of the pleasures I am now speaking of? Do you not know what it is to look up to God in private and to pour out your soul before him?—Unhappy then are you, and a stranger yet to what you ought to be best acquainted with.

It cannot be doubted but that the pleasures I am now speaking of will constitute a principal part of our happiness in every future period of our existence. We can indeed enjoy them but very imperfectly here. Many low cares and desires are continually forcing themselves into our minds, and distracting their attention, and rendering it impossible for us to disengage them enough from sensible objects, and to acquaint ourselves with God in the manner we desire. But hereafter we may hope to get nearer access to him, and obtain clearer views of his glory and majesty. All that now retards the flight of our souls to him, and checks their happiness in him will be removed. Every cloud that now hides him from our sight will vanish, and we shall be able to feel his presence with us in a manner we cannot now conceive. How high then will the pleasures of devotion rise? With what ardor and

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transport shall we be able to worship and to praise him, to cast our souls before him, and to delight ourselves in him?—But let it be remembered, that this is a happiness, which will never be enjoyed by any who forget God now. If we allow ourselves in guilt and irreligion, or cultivate no acquaintance with the Deity in this life, we cannot be fit for seeing him and dwelling with him in another life. A course of present devotion, as it will give us some foretastes of the happiness of heaven, is also necessary to inure us to it and prepare us for it.

"I cannot omit observing further, under this head, that devotion is not only, in the *immediate exercise* of it, thus a source of happiness, but also constitutes a general temper, conducive in the highest degree to happiness. The spirit of prayer is the spirit of hope, humility, gratitude, and resignation; and must therefore, as far as we are possessed of it, be productive of an inward satisfaction and tranquillity which are preferable to all sensible delights. A mind thus turned, has many sources of pleasure peculiar to itself. It is elevated above the tumults of this world, and can preserve self-enjoyment in all circumstances, and take up its rest in God in the midst of outward troubles and calamities. —A truly devout temper is indeed the very temper of bliss. It cherishes and strengthens all the tender and agreeable affections, and checks all the turbulent and painful ones. It disposes us to receive pleasure from every object about us, gives new lustre to the face of nature, renders every agreeable scene and occurrence more agreeable, heightens the relish of every common blessing, and improves and refines all our enjoyments. How blest is that man whose desires are continually directed to heaven; who is always exercising gratitude to the Deity and trust in him; whose heart is kept close with him, and whose thoughts are full of him; who tastes his beneficence in whatever gives him pleasure; who terminates all his views in him, and has learnt to carry his attention from every degree of beauty and good, in created beings, to the inexhaustible fountain of all beauty and good? What peace and serenity must fill a mind, assured that its affairs are under the *best* direction; conscious of its interest in almighty love; and whose regard is habitually fixed on that unsearchable wisdom which conducts all events?

"I will add, that devotion greatly improves the pleasure attending all inquiries into nature, and advances in the knowledge of it. The difference between the pleasure, received by a devout and an indevout mind in observing the universe, is like that between the pleasure, received from the same cause by a man and a brute. It is the consideration of the universe as God's work, and the observation of his power, wisdom, and goodness, displayed in it, that clothe it with its chief beauties, and render it in the highest degree a delightful spectacle. There is no greater incentive to devotion than an attentive consideration of the

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glorious order of nature; nor is there any tendency within us more natural, than that arising from hence to religious adoration. And there is an inexpressible pitifulness in the character of a man who stifles this tendency; who confines his views to *second* causes, and forgets the *first;* who sees not the Deity in his works; who devotes his time to philosophical researches, but satisfies himself with mere speculation; who can survey the world, enjoy its pleasures, and reflect on its wonderful structure, without lifting up his heart to the Author of it, without being warmed into praise, or feeling any pious and devout emotions."

ON MISTAKES OF THE TERMS OF ACCEPTANCE WITH GOD.

THE terms of acceptance with God, or the methods by which the divine favor may be obtained, deserve our most serious regard. The design of this communication is to point out some common mistakes on this most interesting subject.

1. In the first place; it is a very prevalent opinion, that a character good upon the whole, when in the opinion of the world there is more virtue than vice, will at last be accepted by God, though the person is conscious of some favorite sin, which he deliberately and habitually practises, or of the prevailing omission of some duty, which he cannot but know the strictness of christian virtue to require. Such a man's ground of security is this; that although he lives from day to day in the violation of some well known obligation, God will take his character on the whole as it affects society, and striking a balance between his virtues and his vices, receive him at last into favor, or at least screen him from punishment.

It is impossible for me to express in language sufficiently strong, the danger and madness of such a state of mind. St. James has said, that whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all. His meaning is sufficiently plain; that the observance of one or more obligations can never be an atonement for the habitual or deliberate violation of another of equal authority. This would be in fact to annihilate the very nature of religion, of virtue, of obedience; because the deliberate indulgence of any one sin, or the deliberate omission of any one duty, is such a disrespect for the authority, by which our whole duty is enjoined, as cannot consist with any sincere principle of obedience. In this way might the whole decalogue be successively broken, and yet the offender esteem himself secure, because it is impossible to be at the same time guilty of every offence. If you have for a moment believed, that because you happen to be honest, or temperate, or charitable, or devout, you may live in the deliberate violation of any other law, or in the habitual neglect of any practice, which is as clearly a duty, as honesty, temperance, charity, or devotion, abjure, I beseech you, such terrible presumption; for it

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puts eternal happiness at risk, and as God is true, you cannot in such circumstances be safe.

2. In the second place; another mistake of the terms of acceptance with God is to rely upon faith only for salvation. As this mistake, like many others, is founded on the ground of certain passages of scripture, let us hear what is so often quoted on the subject. "By grace are ye saved through faith;" and "a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Does Paul then mean to declare, that a bare belief in Jesus Christ, without repentance and obedience, can secure to any man the gift of eternal salvation? Let his brother James answer, as he has, in terms which nothing can render more explicit. "What does it profit a man, if he say he have faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? No! faith without works is dead, being alone."

If however we will attend to the meaning of Paul in these favorite passages, we shall find no necessity of confronting him with the authority of James. "By grace are ye saved through faith." Observe the expression—ye *are* saved.—Does he mean then that the Ephesians, to whom he was writing, had already entered, or were as safe, as if they had entered, on their everlasting reward? No, surely; for we find from his repeated and earnest exhortations, that they were yet in danger of falling into sin, and of losing all their present hopes, and future prospects. How then were they by grace *already* saved thro' faith? The proper answer is—the salvation to which their faith had introduced them, and which was the only salvation he intended, was a deliverance from the former ignorance and habits of vice, in which they were sunk, before they were acquainted with christianity. From these they were now saved. By their faith in Christ they had now entered on a new and merciful dispensation; and this salvation was to be ascribed to God's grace, for it was a favor, which they had in no way deserved. Thus were they rescued from a deplorable state, and placed in the way of salvation, in which, if they faithfully continued, and steadily improved, they would lay hold on eternal life. Thus were they "justified by faith, without the deeds of the law;" that is, notwithstanding all which the conceited Jews might tell them about the necessity of circumcision and the law of Moses, they might be assured, that if they were virtuous, and improved their christian advantages, they would enjoy the present and final favor of that God, who is no respecter of persons; without the deeds of that ritual law, to which the Jews wished to reduce them.

3. A third and very similar mistake of the terms of acceptance with God, is found among those who profess to rely on the merits of Christ. It is not uncommon to find men, who have never discovered any sentiments of religion, or given any satisfactory evidence of repentance and reformation, using, when they leave the world, this too familiar language. For does not an apostle assure us, say they, that

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"now if any man sin, we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." But for what sins, my christian friends? For those which we have not forsaken, or of which we have not repented? For those sins which we every day commit without remorse, without consideration? Suppose the merits of Christ to be infinite and invaluable? Can they supply our deliberate and sinful omissions of duty? Christ has done nothing, which will ultimately benefit the unrepenting man, nothing which will benefit him, whose presumption on a Saviour's merits is thought sufficient to excuse him from aiming at any virtue of his own.

The application of Christ's righteousness to ourselves is in truth a phrase altogether unscriptural and absurd. The word of God conveys no such meaning as this phrase bears in the mouth of an irreligious man. It is true indeed, that the worth of our Saviour's character is beyond all estimate; and his obedience to death was, in the sight of God, inexpressibly precious; but never can this worth become ours; except so far as we imitate his excellence; and whatever may be the efficacy of his death, never, never let it be imagined that it is a propitiation for the sins which we still retain, the sins which we will not forsake!

Lastly. Are there any of us looking forward to some future day of repentance, as the ground of our security? What do we understand then by repentance? This sentiment is most alarming, because nothing is more true, than that every resolution to repent at a future time, is necessarily, and in the very nature of it, insincere, because it implies a preference of a man's present habits, to a course of obedience.

But you have seen examples of effectual repentance on a death bed. Effectual, my friends? God only knows how far the last agonizing exercises of the dying can alter the very grain and texture of the soul, or essentially affect the character. Of all the sorrow in the world, this dying sorrow would seem to be the most worthless. It may be, if God so please, not without its effect; but in the apprehension of man, it appears the least worthy of consideration, for it is the exercise of a feeble mind; it is the offering of an affrighted soul, the anguish of a frame already in dissolution; in short it is the resolution of a spirit, which can never prove its sincerity, the prayer of a man who must receive his answer in another world.

But you say, did not the thief on the cross repent just before expiring, and express a faith in Christ, which was accepted.—Repent, my friends? We know nothing of his guilt, or of his character. He was crucified, it is true, as a malefactor; but I know not that he discovers any traces of what is commonly understood by a deathbed repentance. All the dispositions, which he then expressed, are those of a well disposed, patient, meek, and christian sufferer. It is true, that he seems to have then, for the first time, expressed his faith

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in Christ, but how know we that he had ever before had an opportunity of seeing or hearing our Saviour? His disposition at this solemn interval authorises us to conclude, that if he had before been acquainted with our Saviour, he would have been one of his followers.

But you say, are there not those who are called at the eleventh hour? what else is the meaning of that parable? We answer, this parable, which originally refers to the introduction of the Gentiles into the church of God, whom the Jews despised because they had been introduced before them, can never be applied to the circumstances of those, who are born within the limits of the christian enclosure. It was at the eleventh hour indeed, that the Gentiles were called; it is still later that the gospel is now made known to many nations of the earth; but, alas, what is that to us, who have had line upon line and precept upon precept; who have been called incessantly from the first hour to the eleventh; and of whom many now see that the day is far spent, and the night is at hand, while yet they have done nothing of that work, for which they were sent into the world.

Reader, whoever you are, delay not a moment to fulfil your christian obligations; waste not life in successive resolutions of amendment. It is not resolutions which God requires—it is amendment itself. And is this life so long, so much within our power, that any of us may say, I will be a christian hereafter? What can authorise us to delay for a moment a single duty? Is it difficult? Will time then diminish, or will it increase this difficulty? Time surely will not do that for us, which time has already made it so difficult to do. It will not change that habit, which it has already made so difficult to change.

But we fondly hope, that years will wear out our evil inclinations, and impair our predominant passions, whatever they may be. Ah, years may bring with them some new habits more difficult to be corrected or excused, but when, oh when, without our own care and cooperation, did time ever cure the diseases of the mind, or change its vitiated humors?

But suppose that age, at last, should cure those evil affections, which have already by age gained so much strength, yet who can promise us a long life? Or suppose it to be granted us, what ingratitude is this! To give at last to God the remnant of a poor, decaying, useless, insignificant life! To serve him most faithfully when your passions are extinct, and you can serve your sins no longer!—Is this virtue? Is this religion? Was it for this, probationary man was sent into the world;—to relinquish what he can no longer retain! and alter a course, which he can no longer follow! Let us not then talk of abandoning our sins. At this period, it is sin which abandons us.

What then shall we say to these things? Shall not all that has now been urged to shew the unreasonableness of hopes, built on any of the pretences, which we have now suggested, separat-

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ed from a life of righteousness and true goodness; shall it not determine us to lay hold of the present opportunity, and to work out our salvation, while the day lasts, because the night cometh —the night of sickness, or the night of death—when no man can work.

Illustrations of passages in the New Testament, which refer to climate, places, offices, sentiments, manners, and customs, among the Jews, in the time of our Saviour.

6.

Luke ii. 25. "There was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same was just and devout, *waiting for the consolation of Israel.*"

Waiting for the consolation of Israel—That is, expecting the Messiah. The expression is derived from a custom of the Jews, of reading the 40th chapter of Isaiah on the sabbath after the fast, in which they commemorated the burning of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar. The chapter begins with the words, *comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.* Hence the predicted Messiah was called, *the consolation of Israel;* and hence the custom among them, at that time, of swearing by their desire of seeing *the consolation of Israel.* So eager indeed, at that time, were their expectations, that every imposter who promised to accomplish their hopes, was immediately surrounded with followers, who hazarded all which they had, to support him. Of this expectation among the Jews, there are several intimations in the gospels. See John i. 19—24. Luke iii. 15. John xxiii. 50, 51. But of its extent and its influence we shall form more correct conceptions, by recurring to the testimonies of profane historians.

"That which principally encouraged them to the war," says Josephus, "was an ambiguous oracle, *found likewise in the sacred writings*, that, about that time, some one from their country should obtain the empire of the world." Antiq. B. ix. ch. 2. § 2, and B. vi. ch. 31.

Two heathen historians have likewise mentioned the same thing. Suetonius, in his life of Vespasian, says, "there had been for a long time, all over the East, an opinion firmly believed, that it was in the fates, [in the decrees, or books, of the fates,] that at that time, some from Judea would obtain the empire of the world." Lib. viii. § 4.

After relating many calamities of the Jews, and prodigies, which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, Tacitus says, "the greatest number of them had a strong persuasion, that *it was recorded in the ancient writings of the priests, that the East should prevail, and that some, coming from Judea, should possess universal dominion*, which ambiguities foretold Vespasian and Titus. But the common people, according to the accustomed course of human passions, having interpreted in their own favor this grand prediction of the fates, *could not be reclaimed to the*

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truth, even by all their adversities." Hist. l. v. c. 13.

Celsus, also, an enemy of christianity, who flourished not long after the middle of the second century, reigning in the character of a Jew, says, "how could we, who had told all men there would come one from God, who should punish the wicked, despise him if he came?"—Without, at present, referring to the preconceived sentiments of the Jews concerning the Messiah, we have endeavoured only to shew the prevalence of the expectation of his coming.

See Beausobre and L'Enfant's Introduction to the New Testament, in Watson's Tracts, p. 222. This is the edition to which I shall refer as an authority. And Lardner's works. vol. i. pp. 132, 133.

7.

Matt. ii. 1. "There came *wise men* from the *east*, to Jerusalem."

"Arabia," says Tacitus, "was the bound of Judea eastward;" and the Arabians are sometimes called in the scriptures, the men of the east. Judges vi. 3. Job i. 3.—The Arabians, Idumeans, and Chaldeans, all eastern people in respect of Judea, valued themselves on their wisdom; and the name of Magus, in those countries, signified a philosopher —a man who studied wisdom. There is, however, concerning these Magi, a great but unimportant diversity of opinions. The star, which guided them to Jerusalem, was probably a very extraordinary meteor, which appeared in that direction; and it is not improbable that the report, to which we referred in the preceding illustration, that a great prince was at this time to arise in Judea, induced them to follow the star. The coincidence of the report, and of this extraordinary light, account satisfactorily for their inquiries in verse second.—"*Where is he that is born King of the Jews?* for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." [See Whitby on the verse, and Calmet on the word *magi*.]

8.

Matt. ii. 3. "When Herod the king heard these things, *he was troubled*."

The Pharisees, says Jesephus, had predicted, that God had decreed to put an end to the government of Herod. This prediction probably originated in their confidence, that the Messiah would soon make his appearance; and this prediction, with the general and well known expectation of the nation, account to us for all the fears, which the evangelist says were felt by Herod. [See Lardner's works, vol. i. p. 281.]

9.

Matth. ii. 5. In "*Bethlehem*, of Judea."

It was a commonly received opinion, that the Messiah should be born at Bethlehem, as the scribes told Herod; and Christ being born there, they affected to call him a Galilean, designing, by this means, insensibly to wear out the remembrance of his being born in Bethlehem. [See Beausobre's and L'Enfant's introduction, p. 273.]

10.

Matt. ii. 16. "Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth,

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and sent forth, and *slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under*, according to the time that he had diligently inquired of the wise men."

This destruction of the infants of Bethlehem is not mentioned by Josephus, nor by Greek nor Roman historians. But is it therefore improbable? Josephus has related many things of Herod, which are not even intimated by the evangelists, but which prove him to be capable of any enormity. We subjoin some of the cruelties which he has recorded of Herod, but which are not glanced at in the gospels.

When he had obtained possession of Jerusalem, he persuaded Antony, by a bribe, to put Antigonus, his rival, to death.—Aristobulus, brother of his wife Mariamne, was murdered by his directions, because the people at Jerusalem expressed some affection for his person.—In the seventh year of his reign, he put Hyrcanus to death, the grand-father of his wife, then eighty years of age, and who had saved his life when he was prosecuted by the Sanhedrim.—His wife, the beautiful and virtuous Mariamne, was publicly executed; and soon after, her mother, Alexandra, was also put to death.—Instigated by jealousy, he caused his two sons by Mariamne, Alexander and Aristobulus, to be strangled in prison, after they were married and had children.—And in his last sickness, a little before his death, he sent orders throughout Judea, requiring the presence of all the chief men of the nation at Jerico. His orders were obeyed, for they were enforced by the penalty of death. When they arrived at Jerico, he caused them to be shut up in the circus; and calling for his sister Salome, and her husband Alexas, he said to them:—"My life is now but short, I know the dispositions of the Jewish people, and nothing will please them more than my death. You have these men in your custody. As soon as the breath is out of my body, and before my death can be known, do you let the soldiers in upon them, with commands to kill them. All Judea, and every family will then, though unwillingly, mourn at my death."—Josephus adds, that, "with tears in his eyes he conjured them, by their love to him, and their fidelity to God, not to fail of doing him this honor."—These bloody orders were not executed;—but was this Herod incapable of commanding the destruction of all the infants of Bethlehem?

Macrobius, a heathen author, who flourished in the latter end of the fourth century, says, that when Augustus heard that among the children within two years of age, which Herod, king of the Jews, commanded to be slain in Syria, his own son had been killed, he said, "it is better to be Herod's hog than his son."—Macrobius has probably mistaken the occasion of the jest, as none of the early christian writers have said, that one of the children of Herod was killed in the slaughter of Bethlehem. But there is no reason to doubt that the jest is genuine; and that the slaughter of the infants in Judea was well known in the time of

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Macrobius, and was not contested by the heathens. [See the subject of this number very amply treated in Lardner's works, vol. i, pp. 329—338.

ON HUMILITY IN THE INVESTIGATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH.

In the last number of the Christian Disciple, this subject was proposed for discussion—and to place it in a clear light, we began with considering what this humility does not imply. Our first remark, to which we then confined ourselves, was, that we are not called, by this humility, to resign our understandings to the guidance of others.—The second remark is this:—

2. To search for truth with christian humility does not imply that we renounce our reason, and yield our assent to inconsistent or contradictory propositions. A humility of this kind is sometimes urged. We are told that the human mind cannot penetrate the depths of divine wisdom; that it is pride to bring God's truth to the bar of our reason; that we are to receive the obvious meaning of scripture, however it may contradict our previous conceptions of truth and rectitude; and that our humility is proportioned to the readiness, with which we embrace what shocks our understandings.

Every man must have met with language like this, not very precise, and not altogether erroneous, but yet adapted to produce unhappy effects, to terrify and subdue the spirit of inquiry, and to prepare men for the reception of any absurdity, which is urged on them, as a revelation from God.

I wish it to be remembered, that in this discussion, I understand by *reason* our intellectual powers, exercised with deliberation, impartiality, and the love of truth. Now it is readily granted, that these powers are feeble, and that human comprehension is narrow, when compared with the wisdom and operations of God. It is readily granted, that the wisest men know little of what may be known, and that a revelation from God may be expected to unfold truths, which have never before entered our minds, and of which nature and providence give us no intimation. But because our faculties and improvements are limited, we ought not to expect that we shall ever be called by our Creator to yield assent to doctrines, which, *after deliberate and impartial attention*, clearly appear to contradict one another, or to contradict the truths, which God is teaching us by reason and by nature. If our rational powers are among the best gifts of God, if they form, in no small degree, the distinction and glory of our nature, and if it is our duty to employ and improve them, can we expect a revelation, which will require us to renounce them, and will introduce into our under-

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standings, perplexity, and confusion? Ought we not rather to believe, that our kind Father will ever adapt his instructions to the faculties he has given us?

Let me ask, why is it that a revelation has been made to man, rather than to inferior animals? Is not this the plain answer, that man is a rational being? Is not the possession of reason the very ground, on which this signal benefit is conferred upon our race; and can we suppose then, that revelation contradicts reason, that it calls us to renounce the very faculties which prepare us for its reception?

It is indeed wonderful that any person acquainted with christianity, can imagine that this religion is unfriendly to the exercise of reason. The fact is, reasoning, reflection, inquiry, and the most serious exercise of our intellectual powers, are demanded by christianity; both that we may perceive its truth, and that we may attain to a just apprehension of its doctrines.

Let me ask the intelligent christian, why he believes christianity to be from God? Have you had, my friend, an immediate communication from heaven, which has relieved you from all trouble of inquiring into this subject? Has a sudden beam darted into your mind, or has a loud voice proclaimed, that christianity is divine? No. You have been obliged to examine the proofs of this religion, to inquire into its original, to study its spirit, to trace its influence. In other words, you have been obliged to reason about it, and reason has taught you to receive it as from God. Thus *the great question, whether christianity be true,* has been entrusted by God, to the decision of human reason. This is a very weighty consideration. This does not look as if reason were to be renounced. Let it be remembered, that christianity appeals to us as rational beings, that it comes to us with proofs, and commands us to weigh them. It asks to be received only upon scrutiny, only because it offers arguments sufficient to convince an unbiassed understanding. Is it then conceivable, that christianity contradicts reason, the very principle to which it thus makes its appeal, to which it addresses the proofs of its divine authority?

If we next consider some of the arguments on which christianity rests, we shall have further proof of the sentiment we wish to establish. Why do we believe christianity to be divine? We answer, because we see it to be worthy of God; because it bears the impress of his wisdom, rectitude, and goodness; because it breathes a spirit so excellent and pure. Now if this language be just, if christianity claim belief on the grounds here stated, then it follows, that this religion would forfeit its claim and be unworthy our reception, were its doctrines clearly to appear, after the best use of our powers, repugnant to the divine perfections, or to any clear principles of truth or duty.

Is it said, that we are too ignorant to judge in any case of the inconsistency of doctrines with the character of God? Let us imagine a christain, who holds this sentiment, disputing with a Ma-

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hometan—The latter asks him for his objections to the Koran. —He answers, your Koran is full of incongruities; it is often at war with the perfections of God. The indignant Mahometan replies, 'Presumptuous man! dost thou, a child of yesterday, presume to fathom the wisdom of the Infinite, or to pronounce on this or another doctrine, that it is inconsistent with those attributes which thou canst not comprehend?' I see not how this reply is to be evaded, if the principle assumed by the christian be correct.

I have thus endeavoured to shew, that the exercise of reason is the proper and appointed method of attaining to a belief of the heavenly origin of christianity. I now proceed to show that, from the manner in which christianity is communicated, we must continually employ upon it our reasoning powers, if we would acquire an accurate knowledge of the instructions which it offers. Christianity is not conveyed to us in language so precise that it cannot be misunderstood. The true meaning does not always glare upon us, so that it *must* be seen unless we obstinately shut our eyes; but great care is often necessary to discover it. Christianity is not handed down to us in a regular and systematic form, in a few connected propositions. It was conveyed by Jesus most frequently in familiar conversation, which grew out of the circumstances in which he was placed. It was often conveyed by the apostles, in epistles or letters adapted to the condition of individuals or churches. And these conversations and letters have been transmitted to us in a language, which is no longer spoken. Must they not of necessity be attended with obscurity? Nothing is less formal and precise, than the manner in which christian truths are communicated. They are expressed, now in bold and glowing figures; now in short and pointed proverbs, familiar at the time, but no longer in use; now in allusions to customs, the traces of which can hardly be discerned. Need I tell you, that such writings, as have now been described, require the exercise of reason, to determine their import, to separate what is local from what is of universal application, and to assign the proper limits to every expression? Sometimes a variety of interpretations will offer themselves, and we must select one from the number. But how is this selection to be made? The only answer is, we must employ our reason; we must inquire which interpretation agrees best with the views of the writer, with other portions of scripture, with the divine perfections, with experience and common sense; and we must not hesitate to reject an interpretation which is inconsistent with these, although it may be suggested by the literal and most obvious sense of the words. Without this exercise of our reasoning powers, we shall continually pervert the scriptures, lose the sense in the sound, and be led into a thousand absurdities.

From these remarks on the manner in which scripture is communicated, we learn the error of those, who say, that the

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first and obvious meaning of scripture ought humbly to be received, and that to depart from this, because it may not suit our ideas of what is right and fit, is to bend the scriptures to our proud and carnal reason. But if it be pride to depart from the first and obvious meaning of scripture, where is the Christian on whom this crime is not to be charged? Hear what the sacred volume says. "If thy hand or foot offend thee, cut it off." "If thy eye offend thee, pluck it out." "If any man sue thee at law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." "If any man hate not his father and mother, he cannot be my disciple." Here are plain passages; but who is contented to receive them in their first and plainest sense? Where are the Christians, who present themselves to our notice, with only one eye and one hand, without garments, and without any natural affection? You should remark, that these passages are found among the practical parts of scripture, where as much precision is certainly to be expected, as in the statement of doctrines; and yet, what christian does not feel himself bound to explain these passages with a certain latitude? Who does not see, that reason and common sense are as necessary guides in the interpretation of scripture, as of any other volume?

Many of the remarks just made will apply with equal force to those, who say, that God is an incomprehensible being, and that we are therefore not to reject a doctrine, because it interferes with our conceptions of his character. Suppose that I take with me this principle, and open my Bible? I very soon read that God repents, and now that he is furious, and now that he has hands and feet—I ask the Christians, who have told me that I am incapable of judging of what is repugnant to the divine perfections, whether I must understand these literally? They answer with one voice, No. God is immutable and spiritual, and these passages are therefore to be taken in a figurative sense. Were I disposed, might I not borrow their own language, and say, 'Presumptuous men! dare *you* pronounce on the perfections of God? Because your feeble reason cannot reconcile repenting, fury, and hands and feet to the attributes of God, will you rashly affirm that they cannot be reconciled? These attributes are incomprehensible, and may therefore be consistent with what appears most opposite to them in the judgment of erring man.'

It is hoped that these remarks will show, that christianity requires no renunciation of reason. To be christians, we need not cease to be rational. There is no such hostility as many seem to represent, between reason and revelation. Revelation addresses its proofs and instructions to reason. Both are God's gifts, both are beams from the same source of light, both are consistent, and both designed to conduct us to perfection and immortality. Let it be remembered, that I am speaking of reason, when exercised with seriousness, deliberation, and impartiality. Will any say, that this deserves no respect, no confidence? What then becomes of the great doctrines of God's existence and of

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the truth of Christianity? These are conclusions of reason, and must stand or fall with the faculties, by which their evidence is discerned.

I am sensible that those, who hold the language, which we have endeavoured to combat, sincerely think that they honor God, when they receive interpretations of scripture opposed to reason; for this, they say, is to exalt divine wisdom above their own. But to me it appears, that we honor God more, when we employ our best faculties on his word, with patient and serious attention, and seek to derive from it the most consistent, harmonious, and exalted views of his character and will. How do we discover our regard to the honor of a respected friend? By slowly admitting any thing, which throws a shade on his excellence, and by seeking and joyfully receiving those explanations of his language and conduct, which consist with the high character we ascribe to him. A regard for God's glory will make us anxious to place him before our own and others' minds in the most venerable and attractive light, and will lead us to distrust any interpretations of scripture, which carry in them a repugnancy to any of his attributes.

Let me conclude these remarks with observing, that the honor and influence of christianity are connected with the refutation of the error, that this religion is at war with reason. This opinion has often exposed its truth to suspicion; and what is worse, it has prepared many christians to admit gross absurdities, as doctrines of revelation. Their minds have indeed revolted against the sentiments imposed upon them; but they have been silenced by the reflection, that their understandings are infinitely incompetent to judge of God and his operations. They have been addressed, as if the merit of belief were exactly proportioned to the incredibility of the doctrines proposed. To this principle we owe the extension of many errors, which have tarnished the lustre of christianity, and exposed it to contempt. We ought to feel that christianity will be suspected and disregarded, just in proportion as scripture is interpreted in a manner, which shocks the clear and established principles of reason and conscience; and that one important method of recommending this religion is, to show that it is a consistent and "reasonable service."

(To be continued.)

HERESY, AS IT HAS BEEN UNDERSTOOD.

When Latimer (afterwards bishop of Worcester,) had obtained great celebrity by his zeal and efforts against the errors of popery, Dr. Buckingham, prior of Black Friars, endeavoured from the pulpit to expose the dangerous tendency of his opinions; and particularly inveighed against his heretical notion, of having the scriptures translated into English. "If that heresy," said he, "were to prevail, we should soon see an end of every thing useful among us. The plowman, reading, that 'if he put his hand to the plow, and should happen to look back, he was unfit for the kingdom of God,' would soon lay aside his labor. The baker likewise, reading, that 'a little leaven will corrupt his lump,'

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would give us very insipid bread. The simple man also, finding himself commanded 'to pluck out his eyes,' in a few years we should have the nation full of blind beggars." BRITISH PLUTARCH, vol. i. p. 193.

EXTRACTS EXPRESSIVE OF CHRISTIAN CHARITY.

"THE more opposition we meet with in these labors, the more honorable it will be to us, provided we meet that opposition with the true spirit of christianity. And to assist us in this, we should frequently reflect, that many of our opponents are probably men, who wish as well to the gospel, as we do ourselves, and really think *they do God service* by opposing us. Even prejudice and bigotry, arising from such a principle, are respectable things, and entitled to the greatest candor. If our religion teaches us to *love our enemies*, certainly we should love, and, from a principle of love, should endeavour to convince those, who, if they were only better informed, would embrace us as friends.

"The time will come, when the cloud, which for the present prevents our distinguishing our friends and our foes, will be dispersed, even that day in which *the secrets of all hearts will be disclosed* to the view of all. In the mean time, let us think as favorably as possible of all men; our particular opponents not excepted; and therefore be careful to conduct all *hostility*, with the pleasing prospect that one day it will give place to the most perfect *amity*.

INSTRUCTIVE ANECDOTES.

ANACHARSIS the philosopher was a Scythian by birth, and was reproached by a haughty Athenian on account of his country. The philosopher replied—"My country, you think, is no great honor to me; and you, Sir, in my opinion, are no great honor to your country."

IN a conversation with Solon, Anacharsis compared *laws* to *cobwebs*, which only entangle little flies, while wasps and hornets break through them.

PERIANDER invited the wise men of Greece to visit him at Corinth. While at table, one of the company proposed this question:—Which is the most perfect popular government? The several philosophers answered as follows:—

Solon. "That, where an injury, done to any private person, is such to the whole body."

Bias. "That, where the law has no superior."

Thales. "That, where the inhabitants are neither too rich nor too poor."

Anacharsis. "That, where virtue is honored and vice detested."

Pittacus. "That, where dignities are always conferred on the virtuous, and never upon the wicked."

Cleobulus. "That, where the citizens fear blame more than punishment."

Chilo. "That, where the laws are more regarded and have more authority than the orators."

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POETRY.

THE DEATH OF THE RIHGTEOUS.

SWEET is the scene when virtue dies,
When sinks a righteous soul to rest;
How mildly beam the closing eyes!
How gently heaves the expiring breast!

So fades a summer-cloud away;
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er;
So gently shuts the eye of day;
So dies the wave along the shore.

Triumphant, smiles the victor brow;
Fanned by some angel's purple wing;
Oh grave, where is thy victory now?
Invidious death, where is thy sting?

A holy quiet reigns around;
A calm which nothing can destroy;
Nought can disturb that peace profound,
Which their unfettered souls enjoy.

Farewell, conflicting hopes and fears,
Where lights and shades alternate dwell,
How bright the unchanging morn appears,
Farewell, inconstant world, farewell!

Its duty done, as sinks the clay,
Light, from its load, the spirit flies;
While heaven and earth combine to say
"Sweet is the scene when virtue dies."

ANON.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

NAPOLEON AND POPE.

Paris, Jan. 28, 1813.

ON the 19th, the Emperor visited Fontainbleu. He immediately repaired to the apartments of the Pope, and held a conversation of nearly two hours with the Holy Father. The next day his Holiness, accompanied by the Cardinals Bayonne, Daira, and Kuffo, the Archbishop of Tarro, and several Bishops, returned the visit to the Emporor, who received him in his great apartments. His Holiness then visited the Empress, who shortly after returned the visit of the Pope. On the 25th, after repeated conferences, his Majesty and the Holy Father signed the Concordat, which has terminated all the differences which have arisen respecting the affairs of the church. The act was signed in the presence of the Cardinals and Prelates.

CONCORDAT.

His Majesty, the Emperor and King, and his Holiness, desirous to terminate the differences which have existed between them, and to remove the difficulties which have arisen in several affairs of the church, have agreed to the following articles, to serve as the basis of a definitive arrangement.

Art. 1. His Holiness shall exercise the Pontificate in France and in the kingdom of Italy, in the same manner, and with the same forms as his predecessors.

2. The ambassadors, ministers, charge d'affairs of powers near the Holy Father, and the ambassadors, ministers, or charge d'affairs of the Pope with foreign powers, shall enjoy the immunities and privileges which are enjoyed by other members of the *Corps Diplomatique.*

3. The dominions which were

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possessed by the Holy Father, and which have not been alienated, shall be exempt from every species of impost; and shall be administered by his agents or charge d'affairs. Those which have been alienated shall be restored, paying a composition of two millions of franks revenue.

4. Within six months, following the usual notification of the nomination by the Emperor, of the archbishops and bishops of the empire and of the kingdom of Italy, the Pope shall ordain them, agreeably to the *Concordats*, and in virtue of the present *indult*. Previous information of which shall be given by the Metropolitan Archbishop. If at the expiration of six months, the Pope shall not have given the ordination, the Metropolitan shall proceed to the ordination of the bishop named, in the usual manner.

5. The Pope shall nominate, in France or in Italy, to ten bishopries, as shall ultimately be agreed upon in concert.

6. The six *suburbicaire bishoprics* are re-established: They shall be nominated by the Pope. Their remaining effects shall be restored; and they shall take measures respecting those which have been sold. On the death of the bishops of d'Anague & Rieti, their dioceses shall be united to the six bishoprics, agreeably to an agreement between his Majesty and the Holy Father.

7. In regard to the bishops of the Roman states, absent from their dioceses from circumstances, the Holy Father shall exercise in their favor the privilege he has a right to bestow on bishops *in partibus*. He shall bestow on them salaries equal to those which they have formerly enjoyed, and they shall be nominated to places, as they become vacant in the empire or in the kingdom of Italy.

8. His Majesty and his Holiness shall concert measures at a suitable time, for the reduction to be made, if necessary, in the bishoprics in Tuscany and the Genoese countries, as also for the bishoprics to be established in Holland and the Hanseatic departments.

9. The *Propagande* and *Penetencerie*, and the Archieves shall be established in the place where the Holy Father shall sojourn.

10. His Majesty grants a free pardon to all the cardinals, bishops, priests, *laics*, who have incurred censure in consequence of events.

11. The Holy Father agrees to the foregoing dispositions in consequence of the existing state of the church; and in the confidence which his Majesty inspires in him, that he will give powerful protection to the numerous wants of religion in the times in which we live.

NAPOLEON,
PIUS VII.

Fontanbleau, Jan. 25, 1813.

LETTER FROM INDIA.

[It is with great pleasure that we offer to our readers the following letter from Dr. Marshman, a missionary in India, to Samuel Salisbury Esq. of Boston, acknowledging the receipt of the money, which was subscribed about a year ago for the translation of the scriptures into the languages of India.]

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Serampore, Oct. 20, 1812.

"DEAR SIR,

"By our brethren, Mr. Johns and Mr. Lawson, we have been favored with the fruits of the regard which our American friends bear to the sacred scriptures—the sum of 4640 dollars. So large a sum subscribed for the word of God, almost wholly by two towns, Boston and Salem, fills us with equal gratitude and surprise. Nor can we pass by unnoticed your personal exertions in this almost unprecedented effort of christian liberality, which you so much forwarded, both by your own liberal contribution, and, what was still more important to us, by your voluntary services in rendering the generous efforts of others efficient, through their confidence in your diligence and integrity in conveying the whole to us. We intreat you to add another favor to those for which we are already indebted to you, by conveying to our worthy friends with you, in any way you judge best, the deep sense we have of this their labor of love to the Sacred Word, and to the souls of the heathens, who are sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, for want of the light thereof;—and to acquaint them with a fact, which it would be unjust to withhold from their knowledge, that by this exertion of Christain liberality *two towns* have sowed the word of life for a *whole nation*: this sum being fully sufficient to defray the expenses of translating and printing a first edition of the New Testament in almost any one of the dialects of India; so that the fruit of their christian love may, through the Divine blessing, (which we intreat them constantly to implore thereon) spring up from age to age in the country thus enlightened even to the day of Jesus Christ. Glorious thought! yet nothing less will be the fruit of this one effort of christian liberality, (perhaps begun and ended in a month,) if it be wisely and faithfully applied, which it shall be ours to do to the utmost of our ability. We inclose the last statement of the Translations in our hands, which you are welcome to communicate to the gentlemen to whom we feel so much indebted, in any way you like.

With our warmest thanks to them and to you, I remain, dear Sir, (for my brethren) your obliged friend and servant in our common Lord,

JOSH. MARSHMAN.

Deacon Salisbury, Boston.

Editorial Notice.

THE Editors of this work will gratefully receive communications adapted to its design, and free from expense. They wish their correspondents to keep distinctly in view the object of the work, and the pledge which has already been given, that it shall be conducted on the principles of christian candor and charity. As it is their wish not to wound the feelings of pious readers of any sect, so it is their design to treat with becoming respect, all their correspondents. It will be their aim to decide impartially on the comparative merits of such pieces, as shall be kindly communicated; yet, considering how few pages they have to fill in each number, and the numerous sources of supply, they anticipate some difficulty in making their selections, so as to give universal satisfaction. It is probable that many pieces, which will deserve a place in the work, must be deferred for a considerable time, and some finally excluded, for want of room. It is therefore hoped, that such occurrences will give no offence. To preclude as much as possible every occasion of displeasure, the Editors now give notice, that they shall not adopt the practice of publicly giving reasons, for declining to insert any communications which may be sent to them. If any writer shall be dissatisfied by the delay of publishing any thing of his, he may expect his manuscript to be returned to him, at his request, without any public marks of disapprobation. Short pieces, well written, will be most pleasing, and most sure to find a place in the Christian Disciple.

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THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

No. 3. JULY, 1813. VOL. I.

THE EFFICACY OF RELIGION AS CONTRASTED WITH INFIDELITY AT THE HOUR OF DEATH.

THERE is no period in the life of man, more important than its close; and there is none in which we stand in so much need of support and consolation. In a time of health, and amidst the busy scenes of life, the spirit of a man will often "sustain his infirmity," but at the awful hour of death, when health and vigor have fled, and earthly objects have lost their power to charm, the spirit must sink under its burden, unless supported by other comforts, and cheered by other hopes than this world can afford. Blessed be God! in the gospel of Jesus Christ a remedy has been provided for the evils of life, and for the terrors of death. That divine religion, which can solace the heart when oppressed with affliction, and even render that affliction productive of real good, can also fortify the mind, banish its fears, and infuse into it serenity and joy, when the scenes of life are receding from before our eyes, when the king of terrors is approaching, and eternity, with all its awful realities, is opening on our view.

So important, indeed, is the influence of religion, at that period, that there are few, however they may have despised its promises, its encouragements, and hopes in the midst of life, who are not desirous of partaking of its consolations at the hour of death. It is a natural sentiment of the heart, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." We can present a striking illustration of these remarks in a case which has recently occurred; a brief narration of which may be interesting and useful.

A female person of a strong and considerably cultivated mind, whose character was amiable, and whose life had been correct, was visited, by the appointment of Providence, with a severe, but lingering disease. She apparently sustained with patience the attack of sickness, and submitted without murmuring to the will of God. The prospect of death, however, occasioned apprehension, and the last enemy appeared, invested with many terrors. By the solicitation of her friends, she was led to seek for comfort in the conversation of a minister, and to inquire if he could not

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suggest some method by which her apprehensions might be quieted, and the bitterness of death removed. When he came to her, he found her in the perfect possession of her senses, and capable, as it afterwards appeared, of close attention and patient investigation.

He addressed her, as he would have addressed any one in a time of sickness, with whose character he was previously unacquainted. He exhorted her to endeavour to profit by the dispensation of Providence, which had placed her in that situation, reminded her that the event of her sickness was uncertain, and, that as she was now unable to mingle in the society of her friends, and to engage in the active business of life, it was a time for serious reflection, and for humble, earnest prayer. He told her that such reflections and prayers would have no tendency to bring her nearer to the grave, but might inspire her with tranquillity, and thus promote the favorable operation of the means that were used for her recovery. He urged her to repent of her many imperfections and sins, spake to her of Jesus Christ, of his merits and mediation, his atonement and intercession, and told her that there was no other name given among men, whereby she could be saved.

She replied with great candor, that she believed in God, considered him as her Father, and her friend, and that she had endeavoured to discharge her duty with fidelity in the various relations of life; but that she had received early impressions unfavorable to the christian religion, that these impressions, from various circumstances, had been cherished and confirmed, and that she now derived no comfort from thinking of Jesus Christ, for she could not believe him to be the Son of God, or sent from God. She said, however, that she had never accustomed herself to ridicule religion, or to speak with irreverence of Jesus Christ; that she had occasionally read the Bible, thought it a good book, and that Jesus Christ was a good man.

She was congratulated on possessing so fair a mind, and was told that there could be no doubt she would become a believer in the gospel. "Perhaps I should be happier, if I were a believer," she replied, or in words to this effect, "for I feel a *void*, which that might fill, and a reluctance to die, which that might abate.

It was said to her, "you believe from a slight attention to the religion of Jesus, that its author was a good man, but do not believe that he was the Son of God. Does he not declare himself to be the Son of God, and to have been sent from God?" "Expressly," said she. "And do you think," it was asked, "that a good man would declare a falsehood?" She hesitated, "I do not know that he would. His object, however, was a good one, to improve mankind, and perhaps—" "We do not believe," it was replied, "that the end justifies the means. There is certainly an inconsistency here. You must either relinquish the belief, that Jesus Christ was a

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good man, which I think you cannot do, or you must believe him, as he declared himself, to be sent from God."

A few powerful arguments in favor of the Christian religion were then presented to her mind, and were the subject of conversation. She was desired to think of them seriously, to endeavour to answer them, and candidly to declare, at their next meeting, any doubts or difficulties, that had arisen in her mind. "We are not afraid," said the person with whom she was conversing, "to have this subject thoroughly examined, and I have no doubts, in a dependence on God, that I shall be able to meet any objections, that may be brought against it. Above all, let me exhort you to earnest prayer, for every good and perfect gift cometh down from above."

The next day was the Sabbath. On the second day of the week, the writer called again, but she had just recovered from a severe attack of pain, and he thought it best to retire, without seeing her; but left for her perusal 'Leslie's Short and Easy Method with the Deists,' abridged by Wrangham, and 'Littleton's Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul.'

It is unnecessary, however, to trace the successive steps, by which she was led from the cold and comfortless state of infidelity, to a belief in the pure and enlivening religion of Jesus. The author of this communication continued to visit her, and on a certain day, on inquiring how she felt, she answered, "I am *much, much* better. I do not mean," she continued, "that my health is better, but my mind is at ease; *I believe in Jesus Christ.*"

No words can convey an adequate idea of the pleasure, the delight, which was experienced by the person she was addressing, when she made this declaration. She was requested to give a reason of the hope that was in her. "I have seriously reflected on what you have said to me," was her reply. "I have read one of the books you left,* and am reading the other; and I have prayed very earnestly, that I might be led to the truth." She then repeated distinctly, some of the more powerful arguments that had been adduced, with her reflections upon them, and declared her thorough conviction of the truth, and divine authority of the Christian religion. By these steps, by a serious attention to the evidences of religion, and earnest prayer to God, she obtained a faith which overcame the terrors of death, a repentance, which I trust has not needed to be repented of, and a hope which entered within the veil, and excited ardent aspirations after the bliss of heaven.

When she became a believer in Christ, she read a part of his gospel, was more and more convinced of its truth, and derived from it a comfort, she had never before realized, and indeed of which before, she had no conception.

From the account now given, it will appear, and I wish it should distinctly appear, that,

* Leslie.

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though this faith was "the gift of God," in answer to humble prayer, yet it was not a sudden conversion, produced by an irresistible operation, exclusive of means; but the fruit of a conviction, effected by the use of means, and by the blessing of God upon a calm, deliberate inquiry. I wish it also to be known, that it was not the effect of terror, nor was there any appeal to the passions, till the understanding was fully convinced.

On the day of her death, the humble instrument of this work was again with her, and had an opportunity of observing the effect of her new faith, and her new comforts, at the most trying period. She was perfectly calm; desirous of dying, that she might be with Christ, but willing to live, and even to endure years of pain, if it were the will of God. The words of St. Paul, in the fifteenth of Corinthians, 'O death,' &c. were repeated to her; and when it was said, "Christ has plucked out the sting of death," her answer was, "*I feel it, I feel it sensibly.*" In short there is reason to believe, that love to God in Christ Jesus was the last passion which warmed her heart, and it is certain, that the name of her Saviour was the last word that hung upon her lips. She fell asleep in Jesus, and, I trust, has received "the end of" her "faith, even the salvation of" her "soul."

To this narrative, it may be pertinent to subjoin a paragraph from a Sermon by the celebrated Mr. Jay.

"Many are too prone to look for a conversion, always uniform, not only in its effects, but in its operation, and too much bordering on the miraculous. The soul must be exceedingly terrified with fear; then overwhelmed with anguish; then plunged into despair; then suddenly filled with hope, and peace, and joy; and the person must be able to determine the day on which, and the sermon or providence by which the change was wrought. But this is by no means necessarily nor generally the case. There is a variety in the temperaments and habits of men, and in the methods employed to bring them to repentance. And we should remember, that there are 'differences of administration, but the same Lord;' that often he prefers to the earthquake, the wind, and the fire, the *small still voice;* that he can draw by the cords of love and the bands of a man; that he can work as effectually by slow, as by instantaneous exertion; and that he can change the soul, in a manner so gradual and mild, as to be scarcely discernible to any, but the glorious author. And here, my brethren, we are furnished with evidence from analogy. In nature, some of God's works insensibly issue in others; and it is impossible for us to draw the line of distinction. 'The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more, unto the perfect day.' But who can ascertain, which ray begins, or which ends the dawn. If you are unable to trace the process of the divine life, judge by the result. When you perceive the effects of con-

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version, never question the cause. And if perplexed by a number of circumstantial inquiries, be satisfied, if you are able to say, 'One thing I know, that whereas I was once blind, now I see.'"

THOUGHTS ON THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD, AND THE BEST MANNER OF PREACHING ON THE SUBJECT.

MUCH has been said and written on the doctrine of divine sovereignty; but different ideas have been entertained on the subject, different modes have been adopted in representing it, and different feelings have been indulged in view of the doctrine. It is, however, certainly desirable, that our views of the subject should be correct, and that the best mode of representing the doctrine should be ascertained

By the aid of analogy we obtain our ideas of the sovereignty of God. In early life we become acquainted with the sovereignty of earthly monarchs. The ideas we thus obtain, aid us in forming conceptions of the sovereignty of Jehovah. An earthly potentate, whose will is the law of his empire, is called an *absolute sovereign*, and his government, *absolute sovereignty*. But as such earthly sovereigns have generally reigned as *tyrants*, the idea of tyranny becomes too often associated with that of sovereignty. Hence, in the minds of many, to say, that God reigns as an *absolute sovereign*, is equivalent to saying, that he reigns as an *unfeeling tyrant*.

But sovereignty and tyranny are very distinct ideas, and not necessarily connected, although they are too often associated in the characters and conduct of earthly princes. To act as a sovereign, implies no more, than to act with *supreme authority*. But to act as a tyrant, is to exercise power, in a cruel and unreasonable manner. An earthly monarch may act as an absolute sovereign, and yet all his conduct may be according to the dictates of benevolence; and all the distinctions he makes among his subjects, may originate from the purest motives.

In representing the sovereignty of God, there should be great care that we do not associate with it the idea of tyranny. There are various purposes, for which the sovereignty of God may be represented; but no one of these purposes requires, nor even admits, the idea of tyranny to be associated. We may exhibit the sovereignty of God, to excite in men a sense of their obligations to love and obey him; to lead them to feel and suitably acknowledge their entire dependence for every favor, their guilt in transgressing his commands, the propriety of submission to his providence; and also to comfort the minds of his friends, under all their adversities, by showing them, that their "times are in the hands of the Lord."

But in what light does it behove the ambassadors of Christ, to represent the doctrine for either of these purposes? If they had occasion to persuade

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men to love and obey an earthly sovereign, how would they naturally proceed? If they had ground for it, would they not endeavour to represent his character, as most excellent and lovely. Would they not expatiate on the wisdom and benignity, which had been displayed in the course of his administrations; his regard to the general welfare of his kingdom; his kindness and longsuffering towards the disobedient? If great distinctions had been made, in his treatment of different persons, would they not endeavour to show, that these afford no evidence against his integrity, or impartiality; that the punishments he had inflicted did not proceed from malignity, or an unfeeling, capricious temper? If there were any instances of the king's conduct, which appeared dark and perplexing to his subjects, would not these ambassadors endeavour to impress the ideas of his superior wisdom, his more perfect knowledge of all circumstances relating to such cases, and of what the good of the empire demanded? And from the many evidences of his kindness, and the general benevolence of his character, would they not lead people to infer the certainty, or, at least, the probability, that in those perplexing cases his conduct was governed by the same friendly temper? Would not such a course of proceeding be the most likely to excite love and veneration for the character of the king, and obedience to his laws? What better method could be taken to produce contrition in the minds of the disobedient, or to make the subjects feel pleased with their dependence on the sovereign; or to excite confidence and submission, under such trials as they might experience, by his general or particular arrangements?

If this would be the best method for winning the hearts of people, to an earthly sovereign, why is it not the best method for reconciling men to God? God is indeed an absolute sovereign; his will is the law of his empire; his counsel must stand; he will do all his pleasure. But he is not a tyrant; he is a wise, benevolent, and fatherly sovereign. He worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will; but his counsel is unerring, his will is rectitude, his heart is benevolence, "for God is love." He chastiseth his children, but "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." He punishes the incorrigible with death, but it is with the benevolence of a God:—"As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." Punishment is his strange work, not that in which he delighteth.

His counsel is unfathomable, his judgments are a great deep, his works are like himself, incomprehensible; yet much may be known of God, of his counsel, and of his works. Enough may be known, to afford ample ground, to represent him as a sovereign perfectly amiable, and to vindicate his character against all charges, or suspicions of tyranny, unfeelingness, or cruelty. From the fund of intelligence contained in his word, and from the boundless munificence of his

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providence, towards sinful men, we may safely infer his wisdom and goodness, in those branches of his administration, which are to us "past finding out." We have evidence that "God is *greater* than man," and that he is *better* than man. On the ground of this evidence, we should all "Be still, and know that he is God." On the same ground, his ministers should answer the cavils of unbelieving and unreasonable men, and endeavour to persuade them to become reconciled unto God.

With proper views of the nature of that sovereignty, which God exercises over his creatures, it must be a delightful thought to the humble, that "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth." But it is the boundless wisdom and love, which he exercises in governing the universe, that renders his character amiable, and his reign a matter of joy. Therefore, in all we say of his sovereignty, his wisdom and benevolence should be displayed, as the fountain of his eternal purpose, and the source of all his operations. If this be neglected, we may indeed state, or rather *misstate* some facts, but we shall probably exhibit a tyrant, in the place of a benevolent Deity.

In describing the conduct of the most wise and benevolent earthly prince, it would be possible to represent him in the most odious light, while the speaker might confine himself to matters of fact. By stating the distinctions, which were actually made under his government, and concealing the reasons and motives of his conduct, he might exhibit the sovereign as a merciless tyrant. He might state, that the king promoted this and that man to office, and neglected hundreds of capable and well disposed citizens; that he caused one criminal to be imprisoned, another to be banished, and a third to be hanged, while he pardoned others, who were equally guilty; that some men were exempted from taxes, and favored with great salaries, while others were burdened for the support of these favorites; that from year to year many thousands were called forth, and sent into the army, to endure great hardships, or to be butchered by enemies, while others were allowed to be at home with their families; that he granted the petitions of some persons, and sent others away empty. Thus the speaker might proceed in enumerating the distinctions made by the king, in the exercise of his sovereignty, according to his own will, regardless of any opinions which might be entertained of his conduct. Before the declaimer had gone half through his discourse, his audience might be prepared to pronounce the king a tyrannical monster, deserving of a thousand deaths, and of the execrations of all mankind.

After hearing this description, another speaker might rise, and admit every fact, the first had stated, and still affirm, that the representation given of the king's character, was *really false* and *abominable;* and then proceed thus:—"The king, it is admitted, acts as a sovereign, but he is one of the most wise and benevolent

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sovereigns, that ever ruled over men. His head and his heart are daily employed in devising or executing plans to advance the happiness of his subjects. He feels like a tender father towards his people, and delights in their welfare. He has a heart to rejoice with those who rejoice, and to weep with those who weep. He is merciful and longsuffering towards transgressors, and shows them every favor which may, in his view, be consistent with the good of his kingdom. It is true that he made the distinctions which have been stated, but in all those cases there were weighty reasons for his conduct. Although these reasons were not made known to every one, yet, from his general character and conduct, every obedient subject would have inferred, that the king did not act in a partial, capricious, and tyrannical manner."

Then, by adverting to public and well known facts, by which the kindness and munificence of the king had been displayed, he might remove all the false impressions the former speaker had made on the minds of the audience; and they might be prepared to exclaim, "*O king, live forever.*"

What magistrate, what physician, what minister of the gospel, or minister of state, would be willing to have his own conduct exhibited to the public, in such a partial, odious light, as we *sometimes* have the conduct of Deity represented from the pulpit? Does not every good man wish to have his own conduct displayed in such a manner, that his character shall *appear amiable* in the view of those, to whom the representation is made?

It is, however, not only important that preachers should make the benevolence of Deity conspicuous, in their representations of his sovereignty; but it is also important, that they should make their *own* benevolence appear by the *manner* of their speaking. As it is the character and conduct of a benevolent God, which they have occasion to illustrate, it is highly interesting that their own *feelings* and *manner* should correspond with their subject. What can be more intolerable and offensive, than to see a preacher, whose business it is to display the love of God to men, disposed to tyrannise over the feelings of his audience, by his manner of representing the sovereignty of God, and the condition of his hearers?

It is, indeed, a solemn and awful condition, to be as impenitent sinners, in the hands of a sovereign God. But "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." These are the glad tidings of great joy, which gospel ministers have to proclaim to sinful men. The same tender love which God displayed in the gift of his Son, and which the Son displayed in laying down his life for us, should be manifested by the preachers of the gospel in their addresses to men. They may justly view the state of impenitent sinners, as criminal and dangerous; but such objects should excite their

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compassion, melt them into tenderness, and lead them to speak in a manner which shall evince to their hearers, that what they say, proceeds from the same temper which was in Christ Jesus. Faithfulness and tenderness are not inconsistent with each other. But do not some of the professed messengers of divine love, in displaying the sovereignty of God, fail to exhibit his benevolence, as the source of his operations? Or, if they bring it to view at all, do they not so place it in the back ground of the picture, that it is scarcely observable? Do they not often exhibit the sovereign purpose, and sovereign acts of God, in a manner so unconnected with his wisdom and benevolence, as to leave the shocking impression on the minds of their hearers, that there is but little difference between the sovereignty of Jehovah and the arbitrary government of an unfeeling despot?

Whether it be the *intention* of a preacher to leave this impression or not, if such be the fact, his preaching tends to defeat the very object of the gospel ministry. Instead of its tending to reconcile sinners to God, it tends to alienate their minds from the gospel itself. If a preacher cannot represent the sovereignty of God, without making such an impression on the minds of his hearers, would it not be evidently better for him to be silent on that subject, and attend to such subjects only as he can illustrate, in a manner which shall appear to be consistent with the benevolence of Deity?

(To be continued.)

FOR THE CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

An extract from the farewell address of the Rev. John Robinson, to a part of his church at Leyden, preparing to embark for America; with a brief notice of his character.

THE name of *Robinson* will be cherished with interest and respect, as one of the first instruments in the settlement of New England. As early as the year 1602, a number of serious and devout christians, part of whom were those same christian heroes, who came to Plymouth in 1620, finding that they could not enjoy liberty of conscience or purity of worship in their native country, voluntarily exiled themselves to Holland. After suffering many difficulties, they established a church in Leyden. Of this church, Mr. Robinson was pastor. He had for several years faithfully served the same people in England, and was honored there, "as a man of a learned, polished, and modest spirit; pious, and studious of the truth; largely accomplished with gifts and qualifications to be a shepherd over this flock of Christ."

The year, in which Mr. Robinson came to Leyden, was remarkable for the death of the celebrated *Arminius*, one of the Theological Professors in the University of that city. To him succeeded the famous Episcopius, who, in his zeal for his particular sentiments, challenged Mr. Robinson to a public disputation,

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The challenge was at first declined; but through the pressing importunity of the ministers of the city, was afterwards accepted; and Gov. Bradford, (the first Governor of Plymouth colony) who was then a member of Mr. Robinson's church, and probably present at the disputation, says, "that the learning and ability Mr. Robinson displayed on this and like occasions, procured for him much respect and honor from these great men and others."

When Mr. Robinson first came to Leyden, he was one of the most rigid separatists from the Church of England. This was partly owing to the severity, with which he and his followers had been treated. But by experience and habitual conversations with good men, he became *moderate and charitable, without abating his zeal for strict and real religion* "It is a sign of a good heart, says his biographer, when a man becomes mild and candid, as he grows in years; and sometimes the choicest fruit is sour, before age has ripened it."* This was eminently true of Mr. Robinson. He learned to esteem all good men, of every religious persuasion; and charged his flock to maintain the same benevolent conduct. He was also possessed in an eminent degree of the talent of peace-making, was happy in composing differences among neighbours and in families. His genius, his modesty, integrity, and candor, were acknowledged by his adversaries. His manners were courteous and obliging. His preaching was instructive and affecting; and it is said, "that such was the reciprocal love and respect between him and his flock, that it may be said of them, as it was of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, and the people of Rome, that it was hard to judge, whether he delighted more in having such a people, or they in having such a pastor."

This English Church had not been established ten years in Holland, before it was found necessary to remove. Their situation was attended with many inconveniences; and after mature deliberation, it was determined, that a part should go to America, to prepare the way for the whole. In the mean time, the majority were to remain at Leyden with their pastor. In July 1620, they all united in a solemn day of prayer, when Mr. Robinson preached a farewell discourse to those of his flock, who were about to leave him; and concluded with an exhortation, which breathes such a spirit of christian charity, and gives such a view of the character of this excellent divine, that I am sure it will be read with pleasure, by every one, who feels an interest in the history of New England, or in the wider and far more interesting cause of our common christianity.

"Brethren," says this good man, "we are now quickly to part from one another; and whether I may ever live to see your faces on earth any more, the God of Heaven only knows. But whether the Lord have appointed that or no, I charge you before God and his blessed angels, that you follow me no farther than

* Cotton Mather.

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you have seen me follow the Lord Jesus Christ."

If God reveal any thing to you, by any other instrument of his, be as ready to receive it, as ever you were to receive any truth by my ministry; for I am verily persuaded, I am very confident, that the Lord has more truth, yet to break out of his holy word. For my part I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the reformed churches, who are come to a period in religion, and will go, at present, no farther than the instruments of their reformation. The Lutherans cannot be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw. Whatever part of his will our good God has revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it. And the Calvinists, you see, stick fast where they were left, by that great man of God, who yet saw not all things."

"This is a misery, much to be lamented. For though they were burning and shining lights in their times, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God; but were they now living, would be as ready to embrace further light, as that which they first received. I beseech you, remember it is an article of your church covenant, "that you be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known to you, from the written word of God." But I must exhort you to take heed *what* you receive as truth. Examine it, consider it, and compare it with other scriptures of truth before you receive it; for it is not possible, that the christian world should come so lately out of thick antichristian darkness, and that perfection of knowledge should break forth at once."

"And I wish you by all means to study union in all things, wherein you can have it without sin, rather than in the least measure to effect division or separation. Neither would I have you loath to take another pastor besides myself; inasmuch as a flock, that hath two shepherds, is not thereby endangered, but secured."

Having said this, he most affectionately commended his departing flock to the grace of God; and the next morning they went on board; where Mr. Robinson, on his knees, in a most ardent prayer, again committed them to their divine Protector; and then with many tears they parted.

Poverty and other obstacles prevented Mr. Robinson from ever gratifying his ardent wish, to visit his American brethren. He remained with his church at Leyden, till death removed him to a better country, in the fiftieth year of his age, and in the height of his reputation and usefulness. The University and ministers of the city not only accompanied him to his grave with their accustomed solemnities; but some of the chief among them, with unfeigned grief, declared "that all the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ had sustained a great loss, by the death of this worthy man." And Mr. Prince, who visited Leyden almost a century afterwards, says, "that the most ancient people, then living, told him from their parents, that the whole city and

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university, regarded him as a great and good man, whose death they sincerely lamented."

These particulars are chiefly selected from Mather's Magnalia, and Belknap's American Biography.

"Now see the man immortal; him I mean,
Who lives as such; whose heart, full bent on heaven,
Leans all that way; his bias to the stars.
The world's dark shades in contrast set shall raise
His lustre more; though bright without a foil:
Observe his awful portrait and admire,
Nor stop at wonder—IMITATE AND LOVE.

REASONS FOR INTRODUCING EXTRACTS FROM AUTHORS OF DIFFERENT SECTS.

As one object of this work is to unite the friends of Christ in the bonds of christian charity, and to eradicate the injurious prejudices, which keep the lovers of truth at an unhappy distance from each other; we shall take pleasure in quoting from able and worthy authors of different denominations. In doing this, we shall at once gratify our own feelings, in rising above party names and distinctions, and give our readers opportunity to see, that pious and benevolent sentiments, and useful writings, are not confined to any one sect of professing christians. We hope it will also be made to appear, that those who confine their reading to the writings of a party or particular sect, adopt a course of conduct, which is highly injurious to their own improvement and happiness. From experience, we can testify, that real advantages are to be derived from reading the works of authors, whose sentiments, on some important points, are very different from our own. Of such benefits we wish all our readers to be partakers with us. As many of them have neither access to a great variety of books nor much leisure for reading, we shall frequently favor them with valuable extracts from eminent writers of different sects. Our extracts will be of a nature, to improve their minds in useful knowledge, and to inspire their hearts with love to virtue, and with esteem for *good men*, by whatever other appellation they may happen to be distinguished, or known.

We are, however, far from being indifferent in respect to what sentiments we communicate and commend. By quoting with approbation from authors of different sects, we are not to be understood, as approving all that such authors have written. On the contrary, if we quote with marks of disapprobation, we are not to be understood, as disapproving every thing to be found in the writings of the author. Much less is our disapprobation of a man's opinion, to be understood as implying a censure of his moral character. We have not so learned Christ, nor so learned human nature, or the condition of mankind, as to feel ourselves at liberty to ascribe all

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the mistakes or errors of a man's head, to the wickedness of his heart; or to censure him as a wicked man, because he differs from us in opinion. We have the happiness of believing, that there are many other adequate causes of error in sentiment beside the depravity of the human heart; and, in our opinion, it is not the part of christian condor, to infer the wickedness of a man's heart, from effects which may be rationally accounted for, on other grounds, or from other causes.

The opinion, that all error in sentiment is the fruit of criminal affections, is itself, in our view, a very great error; yet we should be unwilling to say, that *this* is always the fruit of a wicked heart. We can however say, that we hardly know of any error, which has higher claims to be so considered; for we know of none more injurious in its tendency, or which has occasioned more mischief among christians. In his own view, every man's sentiments are right; and if he have been led to believe, that all error in sentiment proceeds from wickedness of heart; as soon as he perceives, that his neighbour dissents from his opinions, he is prepared to view, and to treat him as a criminal. If his neighbour have adopted the same opinion, in respect to error in sentiment, a foundation is laid for mutual criminations, alienations, reproaches, and even persecutions. To this prolific error, we may trace the alienations, and disingenuous treatment, to be seen among christians of different sects, at the present day; and to the same malignant source, we may trace the innumerable persecutions, and martyrdoms, which have taken place since the crucifixion of our Saviour.

Nor are these, which have been mentioned, all the evils to be imputed to that error. As he, who has adopted it, is naturally confident, that his opinions on other subjects are according to truth; and that those opinions, which are in opposition to his own, are wrong and wicked; he will, of course, fortify himself against every thing, which has a tendency to shake his confidence in his own infallibility. To be informed that any particular book was written by one, whose opinions were different from his own, will often be a sufficient reason for refusing or neglecting to read it; or, at least, to read it with care and candor. For the same reason, he will refuse to hear perhaps the most instructive and pious preacher; or, if he hear, he will take effectual care not to be profited by what the preacher may deliver. On the same ground he will think himself authorised to censure the writings and the characters of others, without any other evidence, than mere hearsay, that they do not agree in sentiment with him. Thus every ray of light, which may rise in the church, will on its first appearance be reprobated as *heresy*. So the light of reformation from popery was denounced as *heresy*, the reformers as *heretics*, and their followers as *deserving of death*. On the same principle, our forefathers were compelled to flee from England, and to seek

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an asylum among the savages of America. Many professed christians of the present age, can look back with abhorrence on the injurious treatment the reformers and our forefathers received, and yet act towards dissenters from their own opinions, on the same intolerant principles. By the voice of history they are admonished of their own liability to err, and of the possibility that they themselves may be in the error, and those in the right, who are treated by them as *heretics;* and by the voice of the gospel they are warned of the danger of assuming the prerogatives of the Judge of the world; yet as though it were impossible for them to err, and as though the prerogatives of the Lord Jesus had been transferred into their hands, they can censure, not only the opinions, but the characters of their dissenting brethren. If, instead of assuming the prerogatives of Christ as a Judge, they would assume the meek and benevolent temper, which he displayed towards his erring disciples, it would be happy for themselves and for society in general.

We rejoice to find that there have been learned, liberal, and enlightened men, of various sects, who have seen and lamented the evils we have mentioned; and who have dared to speak in favor of free inquiry, and to express sentiments of candor and friendship, towards such as have differed from them in opinion. The more this temper and practice is cultivated, the more rapid will be the advances in the knowledge of the scriptures, and the more will christian love, harmony, and peace, prevail in the world.

It is not *christianity* which leads professors of different sects to hate, despise, or reproach each other; and it is high time that this truth should be understood by all, who bear the christian name. By keeping at a distance from each other, by refusing to read with candor each other's writings, and by opening their ears to idle tales, reproachful observations and misrepresentations, good men of different sects may be led on from step to step, until each shall view his brother as little better than the Prince of darkness. But if, instead of this disingenuous course of proceeding, these same persons would mutually act on christian principles, they might find in each other, not only grounds for mutual charity, but for mutual esteem and complacency.

We cannot but lament, to see good men needlessly subjecting themselves to such *restrictions,* in regard to their intercourse one with another, as are at once injurious to their own happiness, and to the happiness of all within the circle of their influence. Their children, almost as soon as they are capable of dintinguishing their right hand from the left, learn the party names of distinction among christians, imbibe the prejudices of their respective parents, and grow up with feelings of disrespect, if not of real hatred, towards such as dissent from the opinions of their guides. Instead of being taught to view error in sentiment as a *misfortune,* they

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are taught to view it as a *crime;* and each child takes it for granted, that his pious father and mother are in the right, and, of course, that those who are of another persuasion must be very wicked people. Before children are capable of judging of the questions in debate, or even of understanding what they are, they are capable of being strongly prepossessed against those who dissent from their parents. These prepossessions may operate as an injury to them, as long as they live, and perhaps forever. If, instead of this malignant influence on the minds of children, they were formed by the precepts and examples of their parents, to tender, kind and respectful feelings, how happy would be the effects on the rising generation!

Nothing, which it may be in our power to do, will be considered as too much, to remove the unhappy prepossessions, which now disgrace the christian world; and to cultivate in all, that candor, moderation, forbearance, humility and love, which are so uniformly recommended and required by the gospel.

"Let not this weak, unknowing hand
Presume thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land,
On each I judge thy foe.
If I am right, thy grace impart
Still in the right to stay:
If I am wrong, O teach my heart
To find the better way."—Pope.

EXTRACT FROM DR. CAMPBELL'S SECOND LECTURE ON "SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY."

"Ay, but the teacher we assign him, say they, is celebrated for knowledge and piety, and is of great reputation among the orthodox, as an orthodox divine. As to his knowledge and piety, are we to sustain ourselves perfect judges of these accomplishments, or have not pedantry and hypocrisy sometimes imposed even upon the generality of men? But, admitting that the character you give him were in both respects perfectly just, do even these qualifications, however valuable, secure a man against error either in doctrine or practice? Have not several, whom in charity we are bound to think both knowing and pious, maintained in many instances opposite opinions, each extremely positive as to his own, and extremely zealous in defence of it? And as to orthodox, I should be glad to know the meaning of the epithet. Nothing, you say, can be plainer. The orthodox are those, who in religious matters entertain right opinions. Be it so. How then is it possible I should know who they are that entertain right opinions, before I know what opinions are right? I must, therefore, unquestionably know orthodoxy, before I can know or judge who are orthodox. Now to know the truths of religion, which you call orthodox, is the very end of my inquiries, and am I to begin these inquiries on the presumption, that without any inquiry I know it already? Besides, is this thing, which you call orthodoxy, a thing in which mankind are

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universally agreed, insomuch, that it would seem to be entitled to the privilege of an axiom or first principle, to be assumed without proof? Quite the reverse. There is nothing, about which men have been, and still are more divided. It has been accounted orthodox divinity in one age, which hath been branded as ridiculous fanaticism in the next. It is, at this day, deemed the perfection of orthodoxy in one country, which in an adjacent country is looked upon as damnable heresy. Nay, in the same country, hath not every sect a standard of their own? Accordingly when any person seriously uses the word, before we can understand his meaning, we must know to what communion he belongs. When that is known, we comprehend him perfectly. By the orthodox, he means always those who agree in opinion with him and his party, and by the heterodox, those who differ from him. When one says then, of any teacher whatever, that all the orthodox acknowledge his orthodoxy, he says neither more nor less than this, "all who are of the same opinion with him, of which number I am one, believe him to be in the right." And is this any thing more than what may be asserted, by some person or other, of every teacher, that ever did or ever will exist? "Words," it was well said by a philosopher of the last age, "are the counters of wise men, and the money of fools." And when they are contrived, on purpose to render persons, parties, or opinions the objects of admiration or of abhorrence, the multitude are very susceptible of the impression, intended to be conveyed by them, without entering at all, or even inquiring into the meaning of the words. And to say the truth, we have but too many ecclesiastic terms and phrases, which savour grossly of the arts of a crafty priesthood, who meant to keep the world in ignorance, to secure an implicit faith in their own dogmas, and to intimidate men from an impartial inquiry into holy writ."

Illustrations of passages in the New Testament, which refer to climate, places, offices, sentiments, manners and customs among the Jews, in the time of our Saviour.

11.

Matt. ii. 18. "*In Rama there was a voice heard, lamentation* and weeping, and great mourning;—*Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.*"

The Evangelist applies to the slaughter of Bethlehem, the figurative language of Jeremiah, in reference to the seventy years captivity of the Jews in Babylon. (See Jer. xxxi. 15.) To give an idea of the grief which this captivity occasioned, the prophet introduces Rachel, rising from her tomb, and weeping at the sight of the distress of her descendants. The tears of the living were not enough to bewail their misfortunes. He calls to his assistance those of the dead; and above all, of Rachel, whose tomb was in the way

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through which they passed, when they were led to Babylon. In view of the murder of the infants of Bethlehem, Matthew avails himself of the same thought and expression. Not far from Jerusalem, on the way to Rama, and near to Bethlehem, was Rachel's tomb. Who then does not perceive, that this application of the language of the prophet, to a Jewish ear must have been highly appropriate; and to a Jewish heart, not wholly divested of virtuous sensibility, deeply affecting?

See Beausobre and L'Enfant's Introduction, p. 263 and 265, and Beausobre's Diss. xi. sur les evenemens les plus memorables du Nouv. Test.

12.

Matt. ii. 23. "*He came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, he shall be called a Nazarene.*"

Nazareth was a small town in Galilee, about twenty seven leagues from Jerusalem. It was built upon a rock, on one side of which was a precipice, from which, we are told, its inhabitants would have thrown our Lord, because he upbraided them for their unbelief. How contemptible the place was, in the opinion of Jews, appears from the inquiry of Nathaniel, *can any good thing come out of Nazareth?* And scarcely less, from the more general expression of the Sanhedrim, or great council of the nation, *art thou also of Galilee? Search and look; for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.* In this national sentiment of the Jews, we find, I think, the most satisfactory illustration of the text. By all the Jewish enemies of christianity, the title of Nazaræan, or Nazarene, was applied as an expression of contempt to our Lord, because he had resided in, and therefore came from that city; and the circumstance of his having lived there, was one reason why they rejected him. Now the Evangelist says, that the reason why he dwelt in Nazareth was, *that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, he shall be called a Nazarene.* But where is this prophecy? Chrysostom thought that the passage was lost. But Jerome and others remark, as it is indeed most probable, that Matthew does not refer to a particular passage, but to what several prophets had said *in effect;* and from the reference to the *prophets*, says that father, it is evident, that he did not take the *words* from scripture, but the *sense* only. The *prophets* may therefore be said to have predicted, that he should be called, or that he should be a Nazarene, when they said that he should be despised, and reproached, and rejected; (See Psalm xxii. 6, and lxix. 9. Isaiah liii. 3—5. Zech. xi. 12, 13.) And he certainly was, among other reasons, because he had resided in Nazareth.

Some have thought that the word *Nazarene* was derived from a Hebrew word, which signifies *a branch;* and that the name, in its application to our Lord, implied that he was that *true branch*, of which Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zechariah have spok-

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en. Others refer the name to the Hebrew word, (see illustration 1.) which the Jews applied to those who were separated to God as Nazarites. But though he was separated to God, in the highest possible sense, our Saviour certainly was not such a Nazarite, as either Samuel, Sampson, or John. But that the followers of Jesus, in the days of the Apostles, were in contempt and reproach called *the sect of the Nazarenes*, we have the best testimony. (Acts xxiv. 5.) After they had taken the name of christians, the opprobrious appellation was given to those, who, retaining the doctrines and ceremonies of the old testament, differed from other Jews in this only, that they professed to believe that Jesus was the Messiah.

See Hammond and Whitby on the text. Beausobre and L'Enfant's Introduction, p. 270. Jenning's Jew. Antiq. vol. i. p. 425, 426, 427.

13.

Luke ii. 42. "When he was *twelve years old*, they went up to Jerusalem, *after the custom of the feast.*"

I do not find that the age is prescribed in the Mosaic law, at which parents were required to bring their children to the passover. When they were twelve years of age, however, the Jews thought themselves bound to carry them to the feast; and it was in compliance with this custom that our Lord, at that age, accompanied his parents to Jerusalem. The law provided for the instruction of children, concerning the institution and purpose of the ordinance; (Exod. xii. 25, 26, 27.) and when they were brought to it, the oldest person at the table addressed them upon the subject, always reciting carefully the expressions, *it is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses.*

The Jews had three great anniversary feasts. 1. The Passover. 2. The feast of Pentacost. 3. The feast of Tabernacles. At each of these, all the males were to appear before the Lord, at the national altar; and the object of this union was, partly to strengthen their attachment to one another; partly that, as one church, they might worship together; and likewise to secure them against the influence of the customs of their idolatrous neighbours. Of the institution of the passover, we have an account in the twelfth chapter of Exodus. The name is derived from the fact, that the destroying angel *passed over* the houses of the Israelites, when he slew the first born of all the Egyptians.

A reference to a few of the customs, against which it was necessary to guard this people, so prone to adopt the manners and the worship of the nations around them, will be sufficient to shew us the propriety, and the importance of this institution. But concerning this, and other peculiarities of the Old Testament, much, without doubt, was known at the time of their appointment, which is irrecoverably lost; but which, if known, would enlarge our views, and confirm our convictions, of their great utility.

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But it is proper to premise, that the passover was celebrated "*at evening, on the fourteenth day of the first month.*" (Lev. xxiii. 5.) The Jews had a civil, and an ecclesiastical year. The civil year began in the month Tisri, which answers to our September and October; the ecclesiastical, in the month Nisan, which agrees to our March and April. The passover was kept in March; and it was expressly enjoined, that the whole of the lamb, except the blood which was poured at the foot of the altar, should be either eaten, or destroyed. The feast continued seven days, on each of which, sacrifices peculiar to this festival were offered. The days which succeeded the first evening, were called the feast of unleavened bread; no other bread being allowed, during the seven days, to be found in their houses. Upon the morning of the first day of the passover, the master of the family threw a piece of bread into the fire, to give notice that the days of unleavened bread had begun.

1. The paschal lamb was required to be *a male*, probably in opposition to the customs of idolatrous Gentiles, who considered sacrifices of the female kind, as the most valuable, and the most acceptable to their gods. It is also said, that a male lamb was commanded to be killed and eaten with so much solemnity, about the time of the vernal equinox, in opposition to the idolatry of the Egyptians, who, at the season of the sun's entering the sign Aries, paid solemn worship to the creature, by whose name that sign was distinguished. Rabbi Abraham Seba says, that this feast of the Egyptians being at its height on the 14th day of the month Nisan, God ordered the killing and eating of a lamb at that time, as a sensible evidence, that *he could not be a God, whom the Israelites could eat.*

2. A similar reason we find for the prohibition, "*eat it not raw, but roast with fire.*" (Ex. xii. 9.) The Syriac version renders the clause, "*eat it not raw; eat it not, while it is alive.*" The Egyptians never roasted any of their meats, which they offered to their gods; but if fire were used, it was to boil them. It is said also to have been a custom of the heathens, in their feasts of Bacchus, which, according to Herodotus and Plutarch, had their origin in Egypt, to tear and to eat the raw flesh of the victims which they offered.

3. It was required that, if any of the paschal lamb should be left, it should be burned. The law extended to all sacrifices, except to those which were voluntary, which might be retained to the next day. But the Pagans often kept what remained of the flesh of their victims, which they carried to their houses, and from which they believed that they should derive most important advantages.

4. It was forbidden that a bone of the paschal lamb should be broken. But they who celebrated the feasts of Bacchus, not only ate the raw flesh of their victims, but tore and broke their limbs to pieces.

It was on the first evening of

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this feast, that our Lord afterwards instituted the ordinance of the supper; and as not only the festival itself, but the lamb which was sacrificed, was called the passover, so *Christ, our passover*, we are told, *was sacrificed for us.* The points of resemblance between these ordinances, have often been stated; and these, for the present at least, we leave to the judgments of our readers, without adding any remarks of our own. But a few circumstances, not perhaps so generally known, will not, in this number of our illustrations, be unappropriate.

When a family was not large enough to eat the whole of a lamb, the master of the house invited whom he pleased to join with him in partaking of it. These assemblies were called *brotherhoods*, and the guests *companions* or *friends*. How cutting then was the reproof of our Lord to Judas, FRIEND, *betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss!* the traitor having committed this greatest of crimes, so soon after having eaten the passover with him?

The guests leaned on their left arms, upon beds, round a table, on which was set the lamb, with bitter herbs, unleavened bread, and a dish full of a kind of sauce, in which they dipped the bread and herbs. This was probably the dish, into which Judas dipped with our Lord.—The pictures, which we have of the last supper, and some which are otherwise very interesting, are erroneous in the postures which they give to our Saviour and his apostles.—When the guests were thus reclining about the table, the master of the family, or some one, who represented him, took a cup of wine, mixed with water; and after he had given thanks to God, drank it; and then gave a cup to each of those also, who were with him. In the paschal supper, this presentation of the cup was repeated four times. When the second was given, they began to sing; and six psalms were sung before they separated from the supper. From the testimony of Luke, (chap. xxii. 17—20.) I think it is very obvious, that our Lord gave the cup *twice* to his apostles; and, as Mark says, that "*when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of olives,*" it is probable that only *one hymn*, or psalm, instead of *psalms*, was sung, before they went out.—When wine was first used on the evening of eating the paschal lamb, or why, I know not; but the fact that it was then drank, accounts for our Lord's choice of it, as an emblem of his blood, which was to be *shed for the remission of sins.* But one humble, penitent, and grateful observance of the institution, will give far more satisfaction to a good mind, because it will be far more conducive to holiness of affections and conduct, than the minutest knowledge of those circumstances of the ordinance, which the sacred writers have omitted, and of which they have therefore deemed it unimportant to inform us.

As the Lord's supper was instituted on the evening of the passover, unleavened bread must have been used in it, as there was then probably no other in the city. The Latin church therefore thought itself bound, in the

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ordinance, to use only bread which was without leaven. But the Greek church, thinking that the Lord's supper was instituted on the night *before* the passover, kept it with leavened bread. Strange as it may seem, this was one of the causes of the great and long continued schism between these churches. Happily, it is not one of the causes of the divisions, which exist among ourselves. But are we sure, that in the day of our final accounts, the circumstances, which separate us from others, will appear to be of higher importance?

Let US *keep* OUR *feast, not with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with* THE UNLEAVENED BREAD OF SINCERITY, AND TRUTH. [See Lewis' Orig. Heb. v. 3 and 4, p. 462 and seq. Jenning's Jew. Antiq. v. 2, p. 166 and seq. Patrick on Exod. 12. Beausobre and L'Enfant's Introd. p. 212 and seq. Saurin v. i. Diss. 47, sur les evenemens les plus Mem. du Nouv. Test.]

(To be continued.)

ON THE TERMS OF COMMUNION AMONG CHRISTIANS.

"THE first question is, what a church ought to require of those whom she admits to her communion?"

"The answer in general is, she is to require the same as the apostles required."

"The Jews, who were baptized on the day of pentecost, gladly received the word of the gospel. The Eunuch, who was baptized by Philip, declared his belief, that Jesus was the Son of God. The heart of Lydia was opened to attend to the doctrine of Paul, and she was judged faithful to the Lord."

"A church has no right, *on mere jealousy*, to exclude from her communion any one, who offers himself.—To reject claimants, in any other way, than by conviction on fair trial, is to set up a tyranny in the church. It is to subvert the liberty with which Christ has made us free. [Dr. Lathrop's sermon on "the nature and design of a christian church."]

WE are desirous of calling the attention of our readers to a subject of great practical importance—the terms of communion among christians. As the institution of the supper is designed to bring together all, who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, it is evident, that every one, who has any just claim to the name of a disciple of Christ, ought to be both permitted and encouraged to join in the celebration of this feast of love. We have reason, however, to fear that this is not always the case among us. Many instances, in different churches, have fallen within our knowledge, of those who are anxious to obey the dying command of our Saviour, but are not indulged with the opportunity. There are many, who profess to found all their hopes of salvation on the gospel of Christ, and whose lives, as far as man can judge, display the power of religion in their hearts, who contribute largely to the support of the gospel ministry—who are active in every thing, which appears to promote the glory of God and the cause of benevolence—but who, notwithstanding, are denied the privilege of sitting

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down with their fellow christians, and giving a public proof of their affection and reverence for their Master and Lord. This refusal is grounded, not on any charge of insincerity in their professions, or hypocrisy in their practice; but simply on this, they cannot give their assent to all the articles of the creeds, which are made the conditions of communion.

We suppose this general position will be assented to by all, that the members of a church are authorized to require of those, who desire admission to their body, all that appears to have been required in the scriptures, and *nothing more.* It is clear, that private and uninspired christians have no right to make new conditions of admission to this ordinance, which Christ, the great head of the church, the author and *finisher* of our faith, has not seen fit to require. What then are the scripture terms of communion?—As our Saviour instituted this rite for the benefit of his disciples, we are safe in saying, that none but his disciples have a right to be partakers; and that all, who *are* his disciples, have a right to partake. We have then only to inquire, who are considered as disciples of Christ in the scriptures? The answer is—all who *credibly profess* to be disciples, or, to use the very words of scripture—all who profess to believe in Jesus Christ as the Messiah, the Son of God.*

It might seem to be desirable that those only who are *really* disciples should be communicants; but as man cannot read the heart of his fellow men, it is impossible to require more than a credible profession, leaving it to God, the Judge of the heart, to determine its sincerity. Now we have no evidence from the scriptures, that any more was required as the *test* of the credibility of such a profession, than a life corresponding to this belief. The only safe and universal principle of judging of the sincerity of any man's profession, on any subject, is the consistency of his practice with his profession. "By their fruits shall ye know them," is the criterion, which is given us by an unerring Teacher.

The scriptures then appear to give us no right to inquire into the accuracy and soundness of of the *particular* views, which an individual may hold, as preliminary to christian communion with him. We are bound to acknowledge him a fellow christian as soon as we are satisfied that he

* We read Rom. x. 9.—"That if thou wilt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Here we find, that belief in the single fact of the resurrection of our Lord, is, in the judgment of the apostle, enough to make a man a christian. The reason is, not that there is nothing else in the gospel to be believed, but that he, who believes this, believes a truth, which will lead him to inquire and search for all other gospel truth. To believe either, that 'Christ is the Messiah,' or, that 'God has raised him from the dead,' implies a belief, that he was sent from God, that his teachings, as far as we do know them or may know them, are to be received as the words of God. The same rectitude of disposition, which has led a man to believe so much as this, will lead him to inquire for more; for "the whole counsel of God."

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sincerely believes the general truth of christianity, and lives according to his belief. The communion is no where declared to be a precise measure of religious attainments. If we think our neighbour's views erroneous, we are to endeavour, by all fair and gentle means, to enlighten him. If we think them essentially erroneous, we may even endeavour to persuade him to delay the act of communion till his faith becomes stronger, and his study of the scriptures more prayerful and profound. But if his means and opportunities be equal with our own—if he tell us, that he humbly hopes his views of religion are gained by a careful study of the scriptures, and the honest use of the lights which God has given him—if he can say to us, in the language of the apostle, "if any man trust to himself, that he is Christ's, let him, of himself, think this again, that as he is Christ's, even so we are Christ's"—then, we conceive, we cannot be justified in refusing to him the benefit of the means of grace, which our common Lord has appointed. Religion, let us remember it, is a personal thing. It is an affair between every man and his Maker. Our neighbour is to be saved by his *own* faith, not by *ours*. He is another man's servant, and is to stand or fall to his own master, not to us. His faith may be weaker than ours; but we are commanded to receive the weak in faith, and that too, *not to doubtful disputations*. He may not understand all mysteries and all knowledge; but is it not possible, that we ourselves likewise may not be wholly exempt from ignorance and error? He may be only a babe in Christ, and require to be fed with milk, and not with meat; but let us guard, lest by our hasty judgment of him, we incur the penalty, which our Saviour so solemnly denounces against those, who offend one of the *little ones*, who believe in him.

But it may be asked, shall we not lend our countenance to error, if we consent to admit an erring brother to our communion? We reply, let us obey the commands of Christ, and leave the consequences of our actions to God. The ark needs not our hands to keep it from falling. We may bear our testimony to what we believe to be the truth, on all proper occasions. We may, by all lawful means, contend earnestly for what we think to be the faith once delivered to the saints. If we think our neighbour to be ignorant, let us seek meekly to instruct him; if we think him erroneous, let us pray for him. But let not the sacred rite, which ought to disarm us of every bitter and every arrogant feeling, which was intended to bind us more closely together by the bonds of love, become the instrument of mutual hostility. Let us find some other method of propagating and defending our views of Christian truth; and not convert the celebration of the memory of our Lord into an engine of persecution against those, who profess to love him as well as ourselves, and whose only crime is, that they do not read the scriptures with our eyes. If christians must differ in opin-

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ion, let not the rent thus fatally descend to the foundation.

These considerations are powerfully enforced by the reflection, that if we err with regard to the terms of communion, which we require, it will be far more dangerous to demand too much, than not to insist on all that we may lawfully ask. If this closing of the door of the church of Christ against those, who profess to found their faith and hope on him, cannot be clearly and fully proved to be scriptural and necessary, is it not both sinful and dangerous? Do we not incur the guilt of depriving our brother of a most important aid to holiness, prevent him from obeying the command of his Saviour, and refuse to him an opportunity of publicly showing forth his Lord's death? Do we not take upon ourselves the right of denying him the privilege of seeking to impress upon his memory and his heart the recollection of what his Redeemer has done and suffered for him?—We assume no light responsibility by thus shutting those doors, which Christ has thrown open, and if we cannot defend our conduct by the clear and express warrant of the word of God, we may be sure we shall have a very solemn account to give at his tribunal.

On the other hand, suppose we should not demand all that we might lawfully require, still if we admit none, who do not profess their faith in the gospel, and conform their lives to their profession, religion, at least, will not be disgraced in the eyes of the world. If we err at all, we err on the side of that charity, which is declared to be greater, than even faith and hope. Suppose the worst. Suppose that some may thus sit down to the table with us, whose views of christian truth are essentially different from our own, and, it may be, essentially wrong; still, cannot this rite be blessed to *me*, because another partakes of it unworthily? Cannot I affectionately remember my Saviour, unless I am sure that all, who eat and drink with me, believe as much and as accurately as myself? But we must forbear to push these considerations any farther at present. We hope that christian people, as well as ministers, will think seriously of them; and, if they shall appear to be well-grounded, that our church creeds may be reviewed, and all those articles expunged, on which the scriptures do not command us to insist, as indispensable proofs of christian faith and love. The cause of truth cannot suffer by forbearing to use unlawful means to promote it. If we deemed so lightly of the principles we maintain, as to think they could not be defended, but by a system of exclusion, and a monopoly of religious privileges, we certainly should not think them worth defending.

Reserving the liberty of resuming the subject hereafter, we shall close what we have to say at this time, by introducing a passage from Mr. Jay's sermon, on "Mistakes concerning the number of the righteous." In stating the various sources or occasions of these mistakes, for his *fourth* particular, he remarks—

"The DIFFERENCE OF OPINION,

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which prevails among christians, has frequently occasioned a diminution of their number. Indeed the readiest way in the world to thin heaven, and replenish the regions of hell, is to call in the spirit of bigotry. This will immediately arraign, and condemn, and execute all that do not bow down and worship the image of our idolatry. Possessing exclusive prerogative, it rejects every other claim. 'Stand by, I am 'sounder' than thou.' 'The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we!' How many of the dead has this intolerance sentenced to eternal misery, who will shine forever as stars in the kingdom of our Father. How many living characters does it reprobate as enemies to the cross of Christ, who are placing in it all their glory. No wonder if, under the influence of this consuming zeal, we form lessening views of the number of the saved. 'I only am left.' Yes, they are few indeed, if none belong to them that do not belong to your party; that do not see with your eyes; that do not believe election with you, or universal redemption with you; that do not worship under a steeple with you, or in a meeting with you; that are not dipped with you, or sprinkled with you. But hereafter we shall find, that the righteous were not so circumscribed, when we shall see many coming from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven."

ON HUMILITY IN THE INVESTIGATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH.

Continued from page 60.

In the former numbers of this work we have offered several remarks, designed to guard against some common misconceptions of that humility, which ought ever to attend our inquiries after christian truth. This branch of the subject might easily be extended; but we hope that the delineation, which is now to be given of this important virtue, will be sufficiently precise, to furnish the means of detecting any counterfeits, which we have omitted to mention.

What then is this humility? What are its foundations? and what its exercises, expressions, and effects?

This humility is founded in just convictions of our *ignorance*, and of our *exposure to error*. We should bring to the study of christianity a sense of our *ignorance*, of the imperfection and narrowness of our knowledge. Never let us imagine, that every important truth of religion has entered our minds; that we have exhausted the living fountains of wisdom, which are opened to us in the word of God; that we have found out the character, purposes, and will of the Almighty unto perfection. We are not indeed required to disclaim all knowledge, to regard our improvements as utterly worthless, or to

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speak of our understandings as covered with thick and impenetrable darkness. Christianity puts into our lips no exaggerated confessions. We are not forbidden to see, and we ought with gratitude to acknowledge, that in comparison with the weakness and blindness of infancy, our minds are enlarged, invigorated, and enlightened.—But still, when we look up to God, that Infinite Mind, or cast our eyes around on the immensity of his creation, how do our attainments shrink into nothing? How profound ought to be our convictions of ignorance and imperfection?

If indeed we have studied the scriptures with attention, we have undoubtedly acquired much useful truth. The most important doctrines of religion require no long and laborious research. Every sincere christian easily obtains many valuable conceptions of those attributes of God, in which he is most deeply concerned, of the great lines of human duty, and of the sublime destination, which awaits human virtue and obedience. But still we are ignorant, and very ignorant. Even in respect to the simplest and plainest truths, our conceptions may continually be rendered more precise, more complete, more vigorous, and more affecting; and can we then believe that we have learned all which the scriptures are designed to teach—that the Christian system in all its height and depth, in all its beauty and perfections, has unfolded itself to our minds—that all the perfections of God, and all his counsels of mercy towards the human race are distinctly perceived—that the character and mission of Jesus Christ, the purposes of his life and death, the offices he sustains, the blessings he bestows, the brightness of his example, and the heavenly purity of his spirit, are all embraced by our narrow faculties—or that we have attained correct and enlarged ideas of our own nature, condition, and prospects; of the perfection, after which we should aspire; of every virtue we should cherish; of the temper which becomes every state in which we are placed; of every aid and motive to obedience; of every sin and snare, to which we are exposed; and of the sublime and tremendous realities of the future world? These are some of the topics, which are offered to our minds in the scriptures. Who has exhausted them? How much remains to be explored by the most enlarged understanding? What a sense of our ignorance should we carry with us in our investigation of religious truth?

But we are not only ignorant, we are *exposed to error*. We are very fallible, as well as very limited in our apprehensions. This we ought to remember when we are searching for truth, and unhappily this is what christians are peculiarly apt to forget. We are exposed to error at once from the infant state of our faculties and from the influence of the passions over the understanding. Of our faculties we have no right to complain. They are noble gifts, breathed into us by God, and worthy of their original.

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They ally us to those orders of pure spirits, which surround his throne in heaven. But God, who delights in a progressive system, creates nothing in its most perfect form. The human mind is to be expanded by exertion. Its faculties are now in the first stage of development, and like the faltering steps of childhood, their efforts are marked with imperfection. As yet, our mental sight is very narrow. If a complex subject be offered to our attention, a single glance of thought is not enough to seize and analyze and unfold it. Its various properties do not immediately imprint themselves on our minds, in their just order, and in all their relations. We must examine them in slow succession. We can embrace only a part, and perhaps a very small part, at a single view. In this process how easily is some important circumstance overlooked, some link in the chain of causes or effects imperceptibly dropped? How easily are we deceived by resemblances?—how often is one property mistaken for another, to which it has an affinity? How easily do we imagine some accidental appearance to be permanent and essential? Thus difficult is it to acquire complete and distinct conceptions of any complicated subject—and even if such have been once acquired, we must not proudly call them our own. We cannot, at any moment we please, revive them with their original clearness and strength. Memory often loses what has been treasured up with toil, or substitutes defaced and imperfect images for the clear perceptions, which we entrusted to its care. Our faculties are not always the same; they are connected with a frail body, and partake of the infirmities of their companion. Dark clouds sometimes gather over the brightest mind. Imbecility and languor palsy the most active intellect. An irritated nerve is sometimes sufficient to destroy the balance of the understanding. The excited imagination presents her visions with the strength of reality, and we yield to them assent, as to the deductions of reason.—If then our faculties so often fail and deceive us in the common affairs of life, what ground have we for hoping that they will never err on the topics of religion? What a signal proof do we give of mental weakness, if we expect, that subjects so vast and sublime as the perfections and purposes of God, the mediation of his Son, the recovery of mankind to virtue and heaven, and the unseen and eternal world, will spread themselves before us with a distinctness, which will banish obscurity or error—if we expect that no important connexion will escape our sight, and that partial views will never give a wrong direction to our thoughts, or seduce our reason into unauthorized conclusions? Who, that looks into himself, and compares his faculties with the extensive objects on which they are employed, can escape the impression, that he is exposed to error?

But did all our danger arise from the state of our faculties, we should have comparatively little reason for fear. We have another and more copious spring of error. We have other seduc-

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ers, active, unwearied, subtle, lurking in the very centre of our hearts. Who does not know the power of the *affections and passions* over the understanding?—These, if unrestrained, insinuate themselves into all the operations of our minds, give a color to all the objects of thought, impart to error a thousand attractions, and strew with flowers the path to destruction.

The influence of the passions and inclinations in darkening and seducing the understanding, is easily explained. Every man knows that he has power, to direct attention to what objects he pleases; and that by confining his attention to certain views or certain evidences, he can give them a disproportioned weight and importance, and can thus bring himself to believe whatever they support. Now the passions continually impel us to this partial and dishonest exercise of the understanding; they open wide our ears to whatever can be urged in support of opinions, by which they are flattered and indulged, and turn away attention from those by which they are opposed.

Let it now be remembered, that we all have irregular passions. This cause of error is operative in every breast. The holiest man has not completely triumphed over himself. His passions indeed are not permitted to break out into open acts, but their influence on the judgment is so silent, so subtle, that without suspecting it, he is often blinded by their power.

Let me ask my readers to look round on the world, and a slight observation will show them the extensive influence of the passions and the temper on the opinions of all ranks of society.—Here you see a man of a timid and gloomy character. His mind is peculiarly open to anticipations of evil, to impressions of fear. Observe how his character has infused itself into his opinions. Observe how he dwells on the most depressing views of religion, until they seem to constitute almost the whole of christianity. To him this system of mercy presents only a countenance of frowns, and menace, and terror. You see him sinking under the most degrading superstitions, adopting the most unfounded and unworthy views of God, and yet afraid to question, even for a moment, the truth of his unhappy errors.—There you see a man of an opposite character. He is cheerful and gay; nothing sad can dwell long on his mind. Observe here the tinge which temper gives to opinion. To this man, christianity speaks only the language of promise. Its threatenings are unheard. It seems to him a message of almost unconditional mercy. Nothing is left in the gospel to strike a salutary terror into the impenitent, or to compose the thoughtless into serious consideration.—Here you see a man bold, fearless, enterprising, fond of singularity, fond of discovery, unwilling to be confounded with the crowd. How exactly do his opinions accord with his character? You see him despising what is commonly received, catching at every nov-

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elty of sentiment, starting objections to established truth, hazarding conjectures, which were never heard before, and delighting to throw out opinions, which he knows will appal more ordinary minds. He cares not how extravagant may be his system, if it only be new and the work of his own hands.—There you see a man of a servile habit of mind, given to imitation, and unwilling ever to walk alone. Here too the temper gives its complexion to the judgment. This pliant man takes the hue of his neighbours. To him, the popular religion is divine. He sees the marks of truth in whatever is applauded by numbers. He despises what is generally decried, and abhors, from his very soul, what all around him agree to denounce as damnable heresy.—Here you see a man stoutly defending opinions, the absurdity of which stares you immediately in the face. Why, you ask, this blindness of mind? The man has only one defect, and that is *obstinacy.* He believes these opinions, simply because he happened, at some former period, to espouse and defend them. To resign them now, would be to submit to an opponent. He can bear any thing but defeat, and therefore shelters himself from conviction under sophistry, which in any other person he would in a moment detect and despise.—Yonder is another, whose opinions shock you by their folly. You are ready to ask—has he lost his senses?—No. He has a *passion for theories.* He loves to build systems. Unhappily he has chosen for the corner stone of his edifice a principle, which is only true within certain limits, and under certain modifications. But this principle he adopts in the widest sense, and nothing is to be admitted, which will not square with this. Common sense he renounces; the plainest passages of scripture he distorts; your best feelings he shocks; and yet the man is sincere—he only wants to raise a consistent system.——Another you may see, who is almost mad in defence of the wildest notions. What has seduced him? He has happened to connect himself with a sect or party, by which these notions are espoused. The adherents of this sect are his constant associates. They continually pour their feelings into his breast; and now the *spirit of party* has absorbed him. The support of his party and the glory of God are completely identified in his mind, and he thinks that the best service he can render his Creator is, to raise the loudest clamor in support of his sect, and to heap denunciations on those, who choose to follow a surer and safer guide.—Yonder you see a man whose opinions are governed by his *interest.* His credit in society, his standing in the church, and perhaps his support depend on his adherence to the popular system. He means to be sincere; he hopes that he is honest; but the dreaded forms of want and contempt, stand at the entrance of the path of truth; he trembles to inquire; and employs his understanding in fortifying himself in opinions, which it is so profitable to believe.—Here you see a man enslaved by the *prejudice of education.* His opin-

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ions are connected with his early attachments; they have grown into him by habit; to renounce them would be like forsaking the friends of former years. The change from error to truth would require too strenuous an effort; and thus he grows old in the chains, which were rivetted on him in his cradle. I will only direct you to two other varieties of character.—Here is a man of a cold and phlegmatic temper, and his temper freezes his religion. No doctrine is admitted, which touches the heart. Have enthusiasts abused any sentiment? He wants no other proof of its falsehood; and thus the noblest and the most affecting principles of our faith are rejected with contempt.—Look once more, and observe that man, whose eye kindles as he speaks of religion. *He* is made up of ardent feeling, of creative fancy—and observe how his opinions receive their shape from his character. Simple doctrines and plain precepts do not satisfy him. He must have mysteries; he must have transports. To be rational is to be tame and undevout, and he gives up reason for the dream of enthusiasm.

This subject is indeed endless. It might be shown that every passion, as far as it is indulged, gives a tinge to the judgment—that the proud man is disposed to reject those doctrines, which call him to be humble—that the avaricious man is prepared to interpret very loosely those precepts, which enjoin liberality—that every sinner wishes to escape the truth, by which he is condemned. But enough, and more than enough has been said, to show the truly astonishing power of the temper and affections over the understanding—and now can any man hope, that *he* is so privileged, as to escape the operation of this most fruitful cause of error, that he is singled out from his whole race and is never blinded by his feelings? —Let the impression, which this whole discussion is designed to form, be fixed in our minds, that we are very ignorant and very fallible beings. This impression is the foundation, and may indeed be called the essence of that humility, which we ought to carry into religious investigation.

The writer regrets, that he is obliged to defer his concluding observations on the marks, expressions, and effects of this temper to the next number.

(To be continued.)

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

PLEASING INTELLIGENCE OF A RECENT INSTITUTION.

"The Boston Society for the religious and moral improvement of seamen," was instituted on the 11th of May, 1812. In the "address to masters of vessels on the objects of the society," it is proposed, "1st, to distribute tracts of a religious and moral kind, for the use of seamen; and, 2dly, to establish a regular divine service on board of our merchant vessels."—In the report subjoined, it will be seen, that as many tracts have been publish-

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ed and distributed, as perhaps could reasonably have been expected. But it is scarcely possible that circumstances should have been more unfavorable than they have been, to the establishment of a religious service in our vessels. We trust, however, that brighter and happier days await us. In this anticipation, and with unfailing reliance on Him, to whose glory we consecrate our exertions, we shall steadily pursue these great objects, confident that God will finally crown them with his blessing.

The tracts already published are 1. "True friendship, distinguished from that which is false, in a short narrative of the life of Jack Saunders." 2. "A sailor's tribute of gratitude to two virtuous women." 3. "The first twenty years of the life of a foundling." 4. "The adventures of a Bible, in three parts."

The society most earnestly solicit the cooperation of merchants;—of the friends of seamen;—of all masters of vessels;—and of all who are interested in the advancement of christian piety and virtue.

The following is the annual report of the Executive Committee, May 11, 1813.

THE Executive Committee of the Boston Society, for the religious and moral improvement of seamen, respectfully report, that they have attended to the duties which were assigned to them by the Society, and, as far as they were able, have endeavoured to accomplish the objects of their appointment.

They beg leave to remark, that the Society was instituted at a time, very unfavorable to its extensive operation. But great as were then the embarrassments of our commerce, new and still greater obstacles were soon opposed to our design. The number of sailors in employ, since the declaration of war, has been comparatively small; and, from the same cause, we have been able to obtain but little aid, where we most expected it, and where it would have been most effectual, from the masters of our vessels. But difficulties were anticipated, and they have not discouraged us; and having looked to God for His blessing on our enterprize, we have been supported by the confidence, that He would not behold it with less approbation, because it was commenced, and has been prosecuted under so many disadvantages.

Your committee have held stated meetings on the first Thursday of every other month; and early formed themselves into sub-committees, for the collection, publication, and distribution of tracts. Immediately after being organized, "An Address to Masters of vessels, on the objects of the Society," was prepared; and, after some time, was published, with our first tract. In December, two other tracts were published; and a fourth has just issued from the press. Of each of these tracts, we have published 2000 copies; and of the three first, many have been distributed, and very gratefully received.

Our plan of distribution has been, to send a number of tracts to those members of the society, who, we supposed, had the best opportunities of getting them into the hands of sailors. Many have likewise been put into the office of a notary, where seamen have received them. They have also been put into slop-shops;—and, by a public advertisement, sailors were invited to call & take them at Bradford & Read's bookstore, the appointed place of deposit. A considerable number has been sent to Marblehead, and to other places in the state, where it was thought that they would be useful; and a hundred to Newport, in Rhode Island. They have been well received in every instance, in which we have any information concerning them.

Your committee was authorized, by a vote of the Society, at its first meeting, to expend the receipts of the year. We have not therefore hesitated, notwithstanding the difficulty with which tracts are dispersed, in the present state of our seamen, to publish nearly as many as we should have done in better times; deeming

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it judicious to have them ready, should any favourable changes take place, for immediate and extensive circulation.

We have great pleasure in reporting the dispositions with which our tracts have been received by our naval commanders, who have not only expressed a willingness to take them, but with great cordiality have welcomed our designs. About 300 were sent to Commodore Bainbridge, when he commanded the Constitution, and 200 to Captain Lawrence of the Hornet. Three hundred were sent to Captain Smith, of the Congress, and 300 to Commodore Rodgers, of the President, a short time only before their frigates left our harbor. The discipline of our ships of war will be favorable to any attempts which may be made, to improve the moral condition of our seamen; and while our navy has commanders like those, to whom its honor is now entrusted, we may look with great confidence to the production of much good, in this large and important part of the sphere of our exertions.

Letters upon the objects of the Society, with enclosures of our three first tracts, have been sent to several gentlemen in the large towns upon the sea-board of our state, inviting them to form other independent, or auxiliary societies. To these letters we have yet received but one answer. The Rev. Mr. Bartlett of Marblehead has informed us of the establishment there of an auxiliary society, consisting of twenty-five members, and denominated—"The Marblehead Auxiliary Society, for the religious and moral improvement of Seamen." His letter upon this subject, we subjoin to our report, convinced, as we are, that it will be heard with much interest.* We have also heard from another of our sea-board towns, that our tracts have been received there by the sailors with great pleasure, and that there is reason to believe, that they are conducive to the purposes of the society.

When our society was formed, it consisted of between 60 and 70 members. This number was then thought to be highly auspicious to our designs. But notwithstanding the checks which were almost immediately felt, in the increased embarrassments of commerce, our numbers have ever since been enlarging; and we have now 149 members, some of whom have extended their annual subscription above the sum required by the constitution. Great therefore as have been, and as are our difficulties, we have much to encourage us; and should it please God to restore the peace and commerce, of which, in His justice, he has been pleased to deprive us, it will be no small gratification to reflect, that, in a day of adversity, we have made this preparation for a right improvement of prosperity; and that we shall be enabled to express the gratitude which is due to Him, by extending to a large, and long neglected part of our fellow-citizens, the most inestimable of blessings, the means of religion, and virtue, and eternal happiness.

* *This letter was not published.*

GAMALIEL BRADFORD,
TRISTRAM BARNARD,
JOS. TUCKERMAN,
WM. E. CHANNING,
RICHARD SULLIVAN,
CHARLES LOWELL,

Executive Committee of the Boston Society for the Religious and Moral improvement of Seamen.

NOTICE.

THE important Report, relating to the Bible Society of Massachusetts, is necessarily excluded from this number for want of room. It shall appear in the next. Several valuable communications are in reserve for future numbers of this work.

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THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

No. 4. AUGUST, 1813. Vol. I.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF THE REV. JOHN HOWE.

Various are the methods for exciting in the minds of men a sense of the excellency and importance of religion. Living examples are indeed the most efficacious. When pure and undefiled religion is exemplified in the lives of its professed friends, it can scarcely fail of commanding respect even from the wicked. It will, at least, command the approbation of their consciences, however much they may despise it in their hearts, reproach it with their tongues, or contradict it in their behaviour. Next to living examples, we may place well written memoirs of the lives of men, distinguished for piety and benevolence.

In every age of christianity there have been some witnesses for God, whose names should be handed down from generation to generation, and be had in everlasting remembrance. Such is the name of the Rev. John Howe. A virtuous man needs only to be acquainted with his character, to pronounce him one of the excellent of the earth. And we hope never to refuse a man of his character a just tribute of respect on account of any difference of opinion. In all past ages good men have been liable to err; we believe it to be so in the present age, and we expect it will be so in ages to come. From this common infirmity of human nature, we claim no exemption; and as we wish others to do unto us, so we ought to do unto them. If we might strike from the list of good men, all who have lived and died in great errors, not one, probably, would be remaining, of those who have left the stage, or of those still living. Correctness of opinion will not, therefore, be the criterion by which we shall distinguish between good and bad men. If we were to make correctness of opinion the criterion, we must, of course, assume the principle, that our own opinions are correct, and make them the standard, by which to estimate the opinions of others; but this would be nothing better than arrogating to ourselves that infallibility, which we deny to the Roman pontiff.

For the information we are now to give of Mr. Howe, we are principally indebted to his biographer, Dr. E. Calamy.

Mr. Howe was the son of a pious

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clergyman in England, and was born May 17, 1630. The same month gave birth to king Charles II; and the same year, to archbishop Tillotson. Mr. Howe's father was settled in the parish of Loughborough, by archbishop Laud; and was afterwards removed by the same hand, because he favored those who were called puritans. Such was the intolerance of the ruling clergy at that time, that several ministers were driven into America, some to Holland, and other foreign countries. The elder Mr. Howe was driven to Ireland, and took with him his son, then very young. While in Ireland the dreadful rebellion took place, in which many thousands of protestants were butchered by the papists. Both the father and the son, of whom we are speaking, were in imminent dangers, but God was their shield and deliverer. The war being prolonged, they were constrained to return to their native country. The son was pretty early sent to *Christ college* in Cambridge; he continued there till he took the degree of B. A. and then removed to Oxford. His attainments in learning and piety commanded attention, and he was soon elected Fellow of Magdalen college. The famous Dr. T. Goodwin was president of the college at that time. He gathered a church from among the members of the college; but Mr. Howe neglected to present himself. As he had an established reputation for piety, this neglect occasioned some surprise to the president, who took an opportunity to converse with him on the subject. Mr. Howe frankly informed him, that he found great stress was laid on some distinguishing peculiarities, for which he had no fondness, and that this was the reason he had not offered himself; that he was not disposed to censure others for their opinions, or to entertain any unkind thoughts respecting them, and if he could be admitted on catholic terms, he would readily become one of their number. The president kindly embraced him, and told him, that he should be admitted on the terms he proposed; and assured him it would be much to the satisfaction and edification of all concerned.

Mr. Howe was first settled as a preacher at Winwick in Lancashire. Sometime after, he was unexpectedly removed to Great Torrington in Devonshire. He was abundant in his labours, and his ministry was greatly blessed for the good of that people. While he remained in this place, he enjoyed a considerable share of tranquillity, and was much respected, not only by his people, but by the neighbouring clergy. He however lived in "*times which tried men's souls*," and some of his trials were very great. It was in the time of Mr. Howe, that Oliver Cromwell usurped the government of Great Britain. Such a revolution naturally exposed many of the clergy to great difficulties, and imminent perils. After Mr. Howe had been some years at Great Torrington, he went to London on some business, and was detained there over the sabbath. He had the curiosity to

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be a hearer in the Chapel at White Hall. Cromwell was present, and fixed his eyes on him, and perceived by his dress, that he was a country minister. Something in the appearance of Mr. Howe gave Cromwell an idea, that he was an extraordinary man. A messenger was therefore sent to request Mr. Howe to visit the protector after the close of the public exercise. Upon coming to him, Cromwell requested him to preach before him on the next Lord's day. Mr. Howe was very reluctant, and modestly requested to be excused. Cromwell told him he should take no denial. Mr. Howe stated, that his people had been very kind to him; that if he tarried so long, they would feel uneasy, and think he slighted their respect. Cromwell engaged to write to them himself, and to send them a preacher, with whom they would be satisfied. This promise he fulfilled; and Mr. Howe preached for him one sermon, and then was urged to preach a second, and a third. Cromwell then determined to have him for his household chaplain; nor was it safe for Mr. Howe to deny him. But it was with great reluctance he complied, and removed to White Hall.

His situation in the family of Cromwell must have been very critical and trying. To please God, and not incur the displeasure of the protector, was no easy task. But Mr. Howe was in an eminent degree qualified for this perilous situation, being remarkable for prudence as well as for integrity. Cromwell placed confidence in him, and of course he had considerable influence on many important occasions. This influence he employed in befriending others, rather than in enriching himself. Many of the royalists and episcopalians were befriended in those days of trouble, by the influence Mr. Howe had with the usurper. "It has been observed by several," says Dr. Calamy, "that there was hardly any man that was in an eminent station in those critical periods, and admitted to the knowledge of so many secrets as he, that was so free from censure in the changes that succeeded. A plain argument of uncommon conduct and caution." "He readily embraced every occasion that offered, of serving the interest of religion and learning, and opposing the errors and designs which at that time threatened both."

The Doctor also states, he never could find that Mr. Howe was accused by any one of improving his influence with those in power for enriching himself, or injuring those whose sentiments were known to be different from his. So disinterested was he in the use of his influence, that Cromwell once remarked to him in this manner; "you have obtained many favors for others; I wonder when the time will come, that you will move for any thing for yourself, or your family."

Some singular ideas with regard to a *particular faith in prayer* and *supernatural impressions* on the mind, by which a person would know that the particular favor he asked of

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God would be granted, were adopted by Cromwell, and became prevalent in his court. These ideas were viewed by Mr. Howe as of a pernicious tendency, and he boldly preached on the subject, in presence of the protector. In the time of his preaching, he observed that Cromwell "knit his brows," and appeared to be very uneasy. After meeting, a person of distinction informed Mr. Howe, that it was his opinion Cromwell would be so incensed, that it would be difficult ever to make peace with him. Mr. Howe replied, "I have but discharged my conscience, and I can leave the event with God." From that time Cromwell was more cool in his carriage towards Mr. Howe, but never discoursed with him on the subject.

After the death of Oliver Cromwell, Mr. Howe continued as chaplain to his son Richard. The reign of Richard, however, was short, and when he was set aside, Mr. Howe returned to his people at Torrington. At the time of the *restoration* of the king, a kind of madness accompanied the general joy. Many were made offenders for a word, and the most cautious preachers were accused and censured, if they were not intoxicated in the same degree as their neighbours. Notwithstanding his great caution, Mr. Howe met with some difficulty. An accusation was brought against him, but on trial he was acquitted. One of his accusers fled from the town and was seen no more; the other cut his own throat, and was buried at the cross roads.

Further trials were in reserve for this good man. In the year 1662, an *act of uniformity* passed the two houses of parliament, by which many of the clergy were reduced to the necessity of violating their consciences, or ceasing to preach. On the day the act was passed, Mr. Howe preached two affecting sermons to his people, and they were all in tears. He could not comply with the terms of conformity fixed by the law, and therefore became a silenced nonconformist.

After the dissenting ministers had been silenced for three years, another act was passed respecting them, by which they were called upon, under a severe penalty, to swear, "that it was unlawful, upon any pretence whatever, to take up arms against the king—that they abhorred the traitorous position of taking up arms by his authority against his person, or against those commissioned by him in pursuance of such commission; and that they would not at any time endeavour any alteration of the government, either in church or state."

This occasioned great perplexity to the dissenting ministers, and they were divided in opinion as to the path of duty. Some took the oath without much hesitation; others hesitated, and Mr. Howe was of this number. However, after serious consideration he and nine others presented themselves to take the oath; but in writing they exhibited what they understood to be the intention of the oath, and in what sense they should take it, which was summarily this; that

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the oath had no other meaning or end than to secure the person of the king and his authority against any *seditious attempts or practices.*

This explanation being candidly accepted by the court, they took the oath.

Mr. Howe continued in the western counties, went from one gentleman's house to another, and readily did any services, he was able to perform.

In 1668 he was persuaded to publish some of his writings, which were well received. But by the intolerant spirit, which then prevailed, he was kept out of employment, until he was reduced to straitened circumstances. At length he received an invitation from a man of high rank to go to Ireland. This he regarded as a kind interposition of providence in his helfalf. In 1671 he set out with his eldest son, and soon after, his whole family removed to that country. There he became chaplain to lord *Massarene*, and was treated with great respect. His learning and piety, together with the influence of his lordship, procured him the esteem of the bishop of that diocese, and also of the metropolitan, who freely granted him liberty to preach in the public church in that town. Not only so, the archbishop, in a pretty full meeting of the clergy, told them, that he would have every pulpit, with which he had any concern, freely opened to Mr. Howe. In return for such kindness, Mr. Howe manifested his truly friendly and pacific spirit, and was useful to many. The smiles of providence seemed to attend him in this place, and he published several pieces, which were highly esteemed; particularly a discourse on *the vanity of this mortal life*, and a treatise *of dilighting in God.* This treatise was the substance of several sermons, which he had preached twenty years before at Great Torrington. He dedicated them to his friends in that place. In the dedication, speaking of the sermons as then published, he said to his friends, "They aim at the promoting of the same end which the course of my labors among you did, the *serious practice of the great things of religion*, which are known and least liable to question, without designing to engage you to or against any party of them, that differ about circumstantials. They tend to let you see, that formality in any way of religion, without life, will not serve your turn; than which there is nothing more empty, sapless, and void, both of profit and delight. I have reflected and considered with some satisfaction, that this hath been my way and the temper of my mind among you. Great reason I have to repent, that I have not, with greater earnestness, pressed upon you the known and important things, in which serious christians do generally agree. But I repent not that I have been so little engaged in the hot contests of our age about the things wherein they differ."

He was deeply affected with the deplorable divisions which existed among professed christians. In a sermon which he preached at the funeral of Mr.

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Mede, he expressed his thoughts in a striking manner on this subject. "I am," said he, "for union and communion of all visible christians; and for making nothing necessary, but what Christ has made necessary, or what is indeed necessary to one's being a christian. Such a union must be effected, not by mere human endeavours, but by an almighty spirit poured forth; which, after we have suffered a while, shall put us into joint, and make every joint know its place in the body; shall conquer private interests and inclinations, and overawe men's hearts by the authority of the divine law, which now, how express soever it is, little availeth against such prepossessions. Till then christianity will be among us a languishing, withering thing! When the season comes of such an effusion of the spirit from on high, there will be *no parties*. And amidst the wilderness desolation that cannot but be till that season comes, it matters little, and signifies to me scarce one straw, what party is uppermost. The most righteous, as they may be vogued, will be but as briers and scratching thorns; and it is better to *suffer by such*, than *to be of them*."

Having quoted this passage, Dr. Calamy remarks, "I cannot help saying, that it never could be for the credit of any church to exclude one of such a make and spirit out of its enclosure."

Other events in the life of Mr. Howe will demand notice. These will be reserved for a future number of this work. But, that our readers may not fail of being favorably impressed in regard to his character, we shall here quote some passages from the preface to his discourse on *the blessedness of the righteous*.

"The design of it is wholly practical. It hath little or nothing to do with disputation. If there be any, whose business it is to promote a *divided interest*, or who place the sum of their religion in an inconsiderable or doubtful opinion, it doth not unhallow their altars, nor offer any affront to their idol. It is indeed equally matter of wonder and complaint, that men can find so much leisure to avert from things in which there is so much pleasure and delight, unto what one would think hath little temptation or allurement in it—*contentious jangling*. What tragedies hath it wrought in the christian church! Into how weak and languishing a condition hath it brought the religion of professed christians! We have had a greater mind to *dispute*, than to *live*, and to *contend* about what *we know not*, than to *practise* the far greater things *we know*, and which more directly tend to nourish and maintain the divine life. We know that generally, by how much any thing is *more disputable*, the *less* it is conducive to the christian life. God hath graciously provided, that what we are to live by should not cost us dear."

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THOUGHTS ON THE SOVREIGNTY OF GOD, AND THE BEST MANNER OF PREACHING ON THE SUBJECT.

Continued from page 73.

LET us farther consider what would be prudent in an ambassador, who is sent from a wise and good king to revolted subjects, to persuade them to become reconciled to their sovereign. In the designs and acts of such a king, there might be some things which an ambassador could not explain to the understandings of common people, in a manner which would clear the sovereign from suspicions of partiality or injustice. Those parts of the king's conduct, which could not be clearly unfolded to the understanding of the subjects, might be just and *highly important;* they might be the fruit of *extraordinary foresight* and *real benevolence*, and appear so to the ambassador, yet he might be sensible of the impracticability of explaining them in a manner which would do honor to the king in view of the subjects; that after all the light he could communicate, they would not be able to discern the *necessity*, the *importance*, or the *propriety* of those arrangements. What then would prudence dictate, as the best course for the ambassador to pursue? What would duty to his sovereign demand? If the subjects had some idea of these mysterious parts of the king's conduct, and should urge these things, as objections to the righteousness of the sovereign, or as evidences of partiality in him, or as grounds on which their rebellion might be justified; it would surely behove the ambassador to vindicate the character of his sovereign according to his ability, and to show the transgressors that they were without excuse. From the general character of the king, the equity of his laws, the innumerable instances of his kindness and love; from what he had done to bring about a reconciliation, that the lives of his subjects might be spared, and from his long suffering towards the guilty, the messenger might lead the disobedient to infer the certainty, or at least the probability, that in other parts of his conduct the sovereign had conducted with the same benevolent regard to the welfare of the kingdom. He might lead those who were parents, to consider how common a thing it is in governing a family and providing for its welfare, for a kind father to adopt measures, the reasonableness and necessity of which cannot be fully explained to the satisfaction of his children. But children may have ground of confidence in a wise and good parent, and may believe that his designs and measures are right, while the reasons of his conduct may be concealed from them. Moreover, so far as it may be in the power of the ambassador to offer light, and to correct any misapprehensions respecting those parts of the king's conduct which were the ground of objection, he might prudently proceed. But

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would it be wise and prudent in him, to be continually urging those things, which he himself can neither explain nor clearly understand? Does the excellency of a king's character, in the view of his subjects, appear from those branches of his administration, which are to them inexplicable? Do they discover the excellency of the king in those things, the reason of which they cannot understand? Surely they do not. Yet from what they DO understand, they may be led to submit to what they DO NOT understand, believing that the sovereign has good reasons for his conduct, whether they perceive them, or not.

God is a great King over all the earth. He deals with men as with rational beings. The ambassadors of his Son should treat with men as with rational creatures, and exhibit to their view such things as are calculated to excite in men exalted ideas of the *majesty* and *amiableness* of the Supreme Being, his boundless dominion, and the perfect equity of his government; that men may see the unreasonableness and danger of rebellion, the propriety and safety of obeying and trusting the Lord.

Such representations of the sovereignty of Jehovah, as would be abhorrent if applied to the government of an earthly prince, are certainly inadmissible and of injurious tendency. Tyranny is tyranny, by whatever sovereign it may be exercised. God claims no right to do wrong. Such is the equity of his government, and so manifest is this equity, that he ventures to appeal to the consciences of the wicked themselves, and say, "Are not my ways equal? Are not your ways unequal?" This equity in divine government should be maintained by ministers; not by representing that things are equitable because they are done by God, but that they are done by him because they are equitable.

But is there nothing in the preaching of *some* ministers, which adds to the impropriety already illustrated? After having represented the sovereignty of God in a manner unconnected with benevolence; and that too with a temper *apparently unfeeling* and *overbearing;* do they not impute it to the wickedness of their hearers, if they do not love such doctrine?

If people do not love the character of God when it is properly displayed to their view, we may, indeed, justly infer the wickedness of their hearts. But surely it is no evidence that a man's heart is very wicked, that he is not pleased with a *partial, distorted* representation of the divine character, or of the government of God. Represent the conduct of any earthly sovereign in the manner in which the divine conduct is sometimes represented, and would it not be impossible for a good man to feel pleased with his character, or wish to be under his government? And can that character be *lovely* in God, which would be *hateful* in man?

We may inquire farther: Do not some preachers infer not only the wickedness of their hearers' hearts from the circumstance

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of their being offended with such representations, but also infer their own *faithfulness* in declaring the counsels of God? Is it an unheard of thing, that a minister should infer his own *fidelity*, and rejoice in the inference, on being informed that such preaching had given offence? But what can be more unsafe, or delusive, than such an inference in his own favor? Why does he not likewise infer the *goodness* of his hearers, and his own *unfaithfulness*, when such of his discourses happen to be *applauded?* If *their wickedness* and *his faithfulness* may be safely inferred in the one case, *their goodness* and *his unfaithfulness* may be as safely inferred in the other.

It is not doubted, that many pious ministers have been in a degree chargeable with the faults illustrated in this dissertation. Misled by the imagined importance of some favorite tenet, they feel as though it must be introduced, in some form or other, on almost every occasion; they become forgetful or neglectful of the importance of exhibiting the benevolence of Deity, as the source of his operations; and as unmindful of the importance of communicating divine truth with "the meekness and gentleness of Christ." It is suspected, that the views which ministers habitually entertain of the nature of God's sovereignty must have influence on their own feelings in discoursing on the subject. If they habitually conceive of God, as so benevolent that he can have "no pleasure in the death of the wicked," and that all his sovereign acts proceed from a wise and tender regard to the welfare of his kingdom; they will naturally discourse on the subject with such compassionate feelings, as are implied in the words of Paul to the Elders of Ephesus—"Therefore watch and remember, that by the space of three years *I ceased not to warn every one, night and day, with tears.*" But, on the contrary, if ministers habitually view the sovereignty of God as of a *despotic, arbitrary, unfeeling* nature, the same kind of sovereignty, which they attribute to Jehovah, they will insensibly exercise over the feelings of their hearers in their manner of preaching on the subject. And is it not this *unfeeling sovereignty*, assumed by the preacher, which, above every thing else, gives offence to his hearers?

By controversy and prepossession, the importance of any tenet, or idea, may be magnified, and a belief of it made to appear like the "one thing needful." And when the importance of an unimportant hypothesis is thus magnified in the view of a preacher, he is in continual danger of sacrificing the honor of Jehovah, and the best interests of his hearers, to the support of a favorite opinion.

If ministers wish the salvation of their hearers, it behoves them to learn how to preach from the example of HIM, who *spake as his Father taught him.* What are, and what are not, *essential* doctrines should be learned from Jesus. Is it not, to say the least, highly improper for the professed ministers of Christ, to represent a belief in any doctrine, as

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essential to salvation, which was never so represented by Christ, or his apostles? What is this short of an implicit censure of the HEAD of the church, as being GROSSLY IGNORANT, or GROSSLY UNFAITHFUL AND UNKIND?

It would astonish a discerning and considerate person, to see a complete catalogue of the various and contradictory opinions, which have, in one age or another, been taught as *essential doctrines of the gospel;* that were never so represented by any inspired teacher; and the most of which do not appear to have been so much as *thought of* by HIM, who was the *Founder* of the christian religion.

"BE NOT CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD."

THIS precept was addressed to men, who, by profession and by name, were separated from the society, in which they lived. The *world*, in the apostolic use of the term, signified the heathen inhabitants, from whose deplorable corruptions the christian converts had just escaped, but to whose licentious manners they were perpetually tempted to conform. And perhaps from the age of the apostles to the present, not a period can be selected, in which this admonition might not be properly repeated and enforced. Undoubtedly the influence of the christian system has meliorated the condition of society, has elevated the spirit of public morals, and enabled scattered individuals, in every age, to attain a degree of moral improvement, which in many periods of the world would have been considered impracticable or romantic. Still however this comprehensive name, *the world*, includes a degree of opprobrium, and notwithstanding the progress of knowledge, the advancement of civilization, and the prevalence of the gospel, the authority of the world's practice still leans to the side of folly; and the wise man cannot yet esteem it the part of prudence to conform to its standard, or consult its opinion.

The precept of nonconformity to the world, is nothing more than this; thou shalt not follow the multitude to do evil. If that many headed monster had not retained, through every age, essentially the same character, we might regard the precept as intended only as a caution to a little band of christians in the midst of pagan idolaters. But we find that the mass of mankind are always idolaters. The worship of *Jupiter*, it is true, has ceased; but *riches*, *pleasures*, and *show*, number as many shrines as ever; and while the sculptured idols of the Greeks and Romans have been long since overthrown, a thousand shapeless, fantastic, and invisible powers are obeyed, under the indefinable, but comprehensive name of fashion. If then the present pursuits of the great mass of mankind resemble their pursuits eighteen centuries ago, and if also the social nature of man continues the same, his power of

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imitation unimpaired, and his propensity to imitate unabated, it must readily be admitted, that the caution we have chosen at this time to illustrate, is neither superfluous nor severe. Be not conformed to this world in its spirit and its practices. These are the two topics, on which I shall offer a few remarks.

1. Be not conformed to the *spirit* of the world. If we look about us, we see the world full of busy beings, some laboring, only that they may be idle, and others enduring the toils of poverty, only that they may be rich, some serving, in order that they may command, others living recluse and solitary, in order to be famous hereafter. The spirit which drives them forward is the same. Their objects are exclusively terrestrial. Suppose that we should be assured from incontestable authority, that the apprehension of another life was all a chimera, and that nothing should be heard of man after his breath had left him, what essential alteration would be required in the present pursuits and employments of the world?

If you think that this censure, proceeding from a recluse and speculative observer, is too severe and indiscriminate, go out into the world, and examine for yourselves. Saunter through the streets, and inquire of the individuals who compose the tide of men, which is ever circulating through them, what is the object which they have now and ever in view; and you will find one acknowledging, that he is in pursuit of some new possession; another is hurrying to secure what he already possesses; another you will see gazing about in listless vacuity, till some pleasure presents itself; another walking with irregular step, brooding over schemes of dignity and future fame; and another rambling without any object, merely because he has regularly rambled all his life. The ruling passion of the world is something short of holiness and heaven. The peculiar duties of religion are esteemed irksome interruptions, except on the days when no other business can be prosecuted. Men live, as if they were never to die; but it is hard to die, as if they were never to live again.

The spirit of a christian should always betray its divine original. Where he conforms to the world he conforms to its best examples; and where he stands alone, it is because he stands on higher ground than his neighbours, that he may be nearer heaven. The danger of the christian in an age of worldliness is not that he should commit a crime, or indulge habitual vices; but that he should so far insensibly conform to the manners of the age, as to induce the scoffer to insinuate, that he is capable of committing them. Nothing can persuade the christian to believe, that God would confer immortality upon a man for living precisely as he would have done, if he had known nothing of eternity—of heaven, or of hell. He is persuaded, that if the will of his God, the retributions of another life, and the intellectual pleasures of religion, should make no part of the motives of his actions, that he would

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be altogether unfit to enter a state where there will be no riches to be accumulated by the worldly; no offices of emolument to be canvassed for by the proud, no gay sights to be attended by the trifler, no feasts prepared for the palate of, the epicure, no wreaths and escutcheons to be inherited by the noble, no acclamations and flatteries made ready for the ambitious.

The christian in the midst of society is never its enemy, though he may sometimes appear to be a stranger. Like an emigrant in a foreign land, he is never entirely familiarised to the language, or reconciled to the manners of the inhabitants; and no flattering complaisanece, no continuance of prosperity, no complication of business, can ever tempt him to forget his native country, even an heavenly. As the foreigner often casts a wishful eye towards the sea, which rolls between him and his friends, the christian is familiar with the contemplation of death, and often stretches his meditation toward the region of the just; and he longs to press that safe but distant shore. A dark flood indeed rolls between, but he is accustomed to the distant roar, and he sees through the mists the everlasting sungilt heights of the land of promise.

2. Be not conformed to the *practices* of the world. Here it would be in vain for us to attempt to enumerate the many customs of society, which contradict the spirit and even the letter of evangelical morality. We shall caution our readers against a few of the most established and palpable.

Who would believe, that among the disciples of Jesus Christ there could ever have been a doubt respecting the unlawfulness of *revenge?* Yet we suspect there are many, who would be unwilling to abjure the name of christians, who indulge without remorse the spirit of retaliation, and who are never ready to be reconciled, till satisfaction is made to their wounded honor. If a period should ever arrive, when the pleasing visions of a millenium shall be realised, and the lion lie down in quiet with the lamb, it will hardly be believed, that, in any age of christianity, it was thought *not* irreconcileable with the character and profession of a christian, to wash out an affront in the blood of the offending brother. Perhaps none of us will be called to this trial of their humility; but it is best for us all to consider what would be our determination, if we should be placed in a situation where the eyes of the world were turned upon us, and the voice of society were crying out, *Revenge.*

Conform not to the world by encouraging the neglect, into which the duties of piety have fallen. I refer now especially to those family acknowledgments at the throne of grace, which were once esteemed as indispensable a part of the domestic arrangement, as the daily provision of food for the household. But now, alas! palaces rise unconsecrated by devotion, and families multiply, and divide, unhallowed, and unblessed. What! does our thankfulness diminish, as our blessings are multiplied; and in the midst of

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greater prosperity have we less time than our forefathers for the offices of devotion? Does the business of the day proceed the more successfully, because it has not been commenced with prayer, or are we engaged in pursuits on which we have not the courage to beg a blessing? Is that repast the sweeter, which is not prefaced with a petition, and that day most free from care, whose worldly course is least interrupted by a recollection of him whose hand upholds us, and whose arm bears the weight of creation? Christians, these things ought not so to be.

Lastly, be not conformed to this world, by neglecting the ordinances of the gospel. It is true, when you are invited to the table, you are promised nothing more, than the satisfaction and improvement which arises from intelligent and conscientious obedience to the authority of Christ. You are offered indeed no accession of influence, no worldly dignities, no earthly wealth; but you are promised what is better. You are promised opportunities of improvement, opportunities of benevolence, opportunities of worship, opportunities of preserving among men by your example the memory of their Saviour, of encouraging by your presence the tempted or timorous disciple, and of recommending to an inconsiderate and dissolute age a religion of purity, of solemnity, and consolation. Neglect not, then, such institutions; be not in this respect conformed to the world, for the fashion of it passeth away. "The Lord is at hand."

DR. CAMPBELL ON MYSTERY.

It is presumed, that many of our readers will be instructed and gratified by reading what Dr. Campbell has written on the terms *mystery*, *blasphemy*, *schism*, and *heresy*. In this and some following numbers will be given an ABRIDGEMENT of his ninth "PRELIMINARY DISSERTATION."

OF MYSTERY.

"We all know, that by the most current use of the English word *mystery*, is denoted some doctrine, to human reason incomprehensible; in other words, such a doctrine, as exhibits difficulties, and even apparent contradictions, which we cannot solve or explain. Another use of the word, which is often to be met with in ecclesiastic writers of former ages, and in foreign writers of the present age, is to signify some religious ceremony or rite, especially those now denominated sacraments. In the communion office of the church of England, the elements, after consecration, are sometimes termed *holy mysteries*. But this use seems not now to be common among the protestants; less, perhaps, in this country, than in any other.

"When we come to examine the scriptures critically, and make them serve for their own interpreters, we shall find, if I mistake not, that both these senses are unsupported by the usage of the inspired penman. After the most careful examination of all

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the passages in the New Testament, in which the Greek word occurs, and after consulting the use of the term by the ancient Greek interpreters of the Old, and borrowing aid from the practice of the Hellenist Jews, in the writings, called Apocrypha, I can find only two senses, nearly related to each other, which can strictly be called *scriptural*. The first, and what I may call the leading sense of the word, is a *secret*, a thing not disclosed, not published to the world, though perhaps communicated to a select number.

"Now let it be observed, that this is totally different from the current sense of the English word *mystery*, something incomprehensible. In the former acceptation, a thing was no longer a mystery, than whilst it remained unrevealed; in the latter, a thing is equally a mystery after the revelation, as before. To the former we apply properly the epithet *unknown;* to the latter we may, in a great measure, apply the term *unknowable*. Thus the proposition, that God would call the Gentiles, and receive them into his church, was as intelligible, or comprehensible, as that he once had called the descendants of the patriarchs, or as any plain proposition, or historical fact. Yet, whilst undiscovered, or, at least, veiled under figures and types, it remained, in the scripture idiom, a *mystery*, having been hidden from ages and generations. But, after it had pleased God to reveal this his gracious purpose to the apostles by his Spirit, it was a *mystery* no longer.

"The apostle, speaking of the antichristian spirit, says, *the mystery of iniquity doth already work.* The spirit of antichrist hath begun to operate; but the operation is latent and unperceived. The gospel of Christ is a blessing, the spirit of antichrist is a curse. Both are equally denominated *mystery*, or *secret*, while they remain concealed.

"I shall be much misunderstood, if any one infer, from what has been now advanced, that I mean to signify, that there is nothing in the doctrines of religion, which is not, on all sides, perfectly comprehensible to us, or nothing from which difficulties may be raised, that we are not able to give a satisfactory solution of. On the contrary, I am fully convinced, that in all sciences, particularly natural theology, as well as revelation, there are many truths of this kind, whose evidence, such objections are not regarded, by a judicious person, as of force sufficient to invalidate.

"The foregoing observations will throw some light on what Paul says of the nature of the office, with which he was vested: *Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God*—dispensers to mankind of the gracious purposes of heaven, heretofore concealed, and therefore denominated secrets. Nor can any thing be more conformable, than this interpretation, both to the instructions given to the apostles, during our Lord's ministry, and to the commission they received from him. In regard to the former, he tells them—*To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven:* no secret, re-

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lating to this subject, is withheld from you: *but to them it is not given;* that is, *not yet given.* For these very apostles, when commissioned to preach, were not only empowered, but commanded, to disclose to all the world the whole mystery of God, his secret counsels in regard to man's salvation. And that they might not imagine, that the private informations, received from their Master, had never been intended for the public ear, he gave them this express injunction, *What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light. And what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house-tops.* He assigns the reason, the divine decree; a topic, to which he oftener than once recurs. *There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed, and hid, that shall not be known.* Again: *There is nothing hid, that shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.* This may serve to explain to us the import of these phrases, which occur in the Epistles, as expressing the whole christian institution, *the mystery of the gospel, the mystery of the faith, the mystery of God, and the mystery of Christ;* mystery, in the singular number, not mysteries, in the plural, which would have been more conformable to the modern import of the word, as relating to the incomprehensibility of the different articles of doctrine. But the *whole of the gospel,* taken together, is denominated *the mystery,* the grand *secret,* in reference to the silence or concealment, under which it was formerly kept; as, in like manner, it is styled the *revelation* of Jesus Christ, in reference to the publication afterwards enjoined.

"I signified before, that there was another meaning, which the term μυστηριον sometimes bears in the New Testament. But it is so nearly related to the former, that I am doubtful whether I can call it other than a particular application of the same meaning. However, if the thing be understood, it is not material which of the two ways we denominate it. The word is sometimes employed to denote the figurative sense, as distinguished from the literal; which is conveyed under any fable, parable, allegory, symbolical action, representation, dream, or vision. It is plain, that, in this case, the term μυστηριον is used comparatively; for however clear the meaning intended to be conveyed in the apologue, or parable, may be to the intelligent, it is obscure, compared with the literal sense, which, to the unintelligent, proves a kind of veil. The one is, as it were, open to the senses; the other requires penetration and reflection. Perhaps there was some allusion to this import of the term, when our Lord said to his disciples, *To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to them that are without, all these things are done in parables.* The apostles were let into the secret, and got the spiritual sense of the similitude, whilst the multitude amused themselves with the letter, and searched no farther.

"In this sense, *mystery* is used in these words: *The mystery of the seven stars, which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven*

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golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches. Again, in the same book: *I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her*, &c. There is only one other passage, to which this meaning of the word is adapted, and on which I shall have occasion to remark afterwards: *This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.*

"Before I finish this topic, it is proper to take notice of one passage, wherein the word μυστηριον, it may be plausibly urged, must have the same sense with that, which present use gives to the English word *mystery*, and denotes something, which, though revealed, is inexplicable, and, to human faculties, unintelligible. The words are, *Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.* I do not here inquire into the justness of this reading, though differing from that of the two most ancient versions, the Syriac and the Vulgate, and some of the oldest manuscripts. The words, as they stand, sufficiently answer my purpose. Admit then, that some of the great articles enumerated may be justly called mysteries, in the ecclesiastical and present acceptation of the term; it does not follow, that this is the sense of the term here. When a word in a sentence of holy writ is susceptible of two interpretations, so that the sentence, whichsoever of the two ways the word be interpreted, conveys a distinct meaning, suitable to the scope of the place; and when one of these interpretations expresses the common import of the word in holy writ, and the other assigns it a meaning, which it plainly has not in any other passage of scripture, the rules of criticism manifestly require, that we recur to the common acceptation of the term. Nothing can vindicate us in giving it a singular, or even a very uncommon signification, but that all the more usual meanings would make the sentence involve some absurdity or nonsense. This is not the case here. The purport of the sentence plainly is, 'Great, unquestionably, is the divine secret, of which our religion brings the discovery; God was manifest in the flesh,' &c."

Illustrations of passages in the New Testament, which refer to climate, places, offices, sentiments, manners, and customs among the Jews, in the time of our Saviour.

Continued from page 85.

14.

Luke ii. 46. "They found him *in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors*, both *hearing them, and asking them questions.*"

In what part of the temple was Jesus? and how could he be sitting in the midst of the doctors?

We answer the first inquiry, by

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giving a general idea of the construction of the temple.

This superb edifice was divided into three principal parts. The first was *the most holy place*, or *the holy of holies*. The second was *the holy place*, where the priests every day, morning and evening, offered incense at the hour of prayer, and lighted the lamps. The third was *the court*, which was divided into two parts, one of which was occupied by the priests, who offered the sacrifices, and the other by the people. This great court was surrounded by porticos, in which there were various apartments, for the ministers of the temple, for the sacred vessels, the sacerdotal habits, the offerings of the faithful, and for the doctors, who assembled there, to give lessons to their disciples.—It was in one of these apartments that Jesus was found by his mother.

The expression of the Evangelist, that Jesus was *in the midst* of the doctors, means no more than that he was *with* them. Philo says, that the doctors sat in the synagogue, on elevated seats, and their disciples, or scholars, at their feet, on benches, or mats. Paul makes allusion to this custom when he says, that he was *brought up at the feet of Gamaliel*. (Acts xxii. 3.) It is probable that Jesus, in the same manner, sat at the feet of the doctors. So we find Mary, sitting at *his* feet, to hear his word.

It was permitted, and was customary for pupils, or for any one who was present, to propose to the ruler, or to the whole Sanhedrim, any doubts of which they would obtain a solution. No questions indeed could be more idle, and no doubts more absurd, than those, which were often proposed on these occasions. From the days of Moses, say the rabbins, to the days of Gamaliel, disciples stood while they learned the law; but when Gamaliel died, the world became sick, and disciples sat while they were taught.—Hence the tradition, that when Gamaliel died, the glory of the law departed.

All who were under twelve years of age, were called by the Jews *little children*. A child at that age became *a son of the commandment*, because it was the time in which they required him to enter upon the study of the law.—Hence probably the custom of carrying children at that age to the passover. At an earlier age, Jesus would not have been received among the doctors; but the simple fact of his proposing questions to them, excited in them no surprise, as the privilege was, at that age, allowed to all.

We are not informed what were the questions, which Jesus proposed to the rabbies; but the object of their studies was the law and the prophets; and this was the only knowledge, which was valued in the nation. The question which was then deemed the most important of all, and which was agitated in their schools with the greatest interest, concerned the Messiah. Next to God, he was the principal object of their faith and hope. It is probable therefore that he asked, when they thought the Messiah would appear? what would be his character? what the signs of his coming? how he would be

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known? what would be the nature of his kingdom? and what were the blessings, which he would bring to the nation?—But whatever were his questions, *they that heard him were astonished at his understanding and his answers.* [See Beausobre's Diss. 12, sur les evenemens les plus memorables du Nouv. Test. Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. in text, Wotton's Diss. on the traditions and usages of the scribes and pharisees, v. i. pp. 193, 194.

15.

Luke iii. 1. "In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, *Pontius Pilate being Governor of Judea*, and Herod being *Tetrarch* of Galilee, and his brother Philip *Tetrarch* of Iturea, and the region of Traconitis, and Lysanias *Tetrarch* of Abilene."

Lardner, in his credibility of the gospel history, has made a very elaborate examination of these "notes of time, which are mentioned by the Evangelist." To most of our readers, the subject would neither be very interesting nor profitable; but any who wish information on the subject, we refer to the first vol. of his works, pp. 339—383.

Jesephus says that Pilate governed Judea ten years; from the 12th or 13th of Tiberius, to his 22d, or 23d year. In his temper, he was obstinate and impetuous, and little regarded the sentiments, the customs and the feelings of the Jews. He well knew, that former governors, on account of the abhorrenee which the Jews felt of every image and representation of the kind, had not carried the ensigns of Cæsar within the city of Jerusalem; but availing himself of the secresy of night, Pilate brought them in; and when the Jews, in vast numbers, for five continued days and nights, had besought him to remove them, on the sixth, after deceiving them by a pretence of bringing their petition to a trial, he caused them to be surrounded by soldiers, and threatened to massacre every one if they did not retire. The Jews immediately prostrated themselves again, and uncovering their necks, cried out, that they had rather die in the most disgraceful manner, than to submit to so impious a violation of their laws. Astonished and overcome by their inflexible resolution, he caused the ensigns to be carried back to Cæsarea.

There is another similar fact, which tends at once to illustrate the character of Pilate and of the Jews. He intended to dedicate some golden bucklers to Tiberius, in the palace of Herod; not so much that he might honor Tiberius, as that he might vex the Jews. No sooner was this known to the people, than they commissioned some of their most respectable citizens, to beg of Pilate not to make this innovation upon their laws. For some time he was inexorable; but when threatened with an appeal to Cæsar, in which he feared that his rapines, cruelties, murders, and other crimes would be disclosed, he relented and encouraged them;—but the threatened appeal being made, Tiberius immediately ordered him to remove the bucklers from Jerusalem.

Luke tells us, (ch. xiii. 1.) that Pilate caused a number of Galileans to be slaughtered, while

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they were sacrificing in the temple. These were probably followers of Judas Gaulonita, who made himself obnoxious to the governor, by teaching doctrines, which opposed subjection to the Roman empire. This fact is rendered interesting to us, by the use which was made of it by our Saviour; for he availed himself of it to correct the prevailing and erroneous sentiment, that men must therefore be greater sinners than others, "*because they suffered such things;*" and to check that disposition to judge others, rather than ourselves, which ever has been, and while it is indulged, ever will be a powerful restraint of our own moral and religious improvement. But who these Galileans were, or why Pilate ordered them to be put to death, is not known with certainty. To defray the expenses of a canal, by which he was bringing water to Jerusalem, he robbed the treasury of the temple; and Philo the Jew says, that for money, he pronounced any sentence that was desired. I have here adduced these circumstances of his character and life, because I would afterwards have occasion only to refer to them. They entirely explain the peculiarities of his conduct, in the trial of our Lord; and in the surrender of Jesus, of whose innocence he was convinced, to his envious and milicious enemies.

See Calmet on the word Pilate; Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. tom. ii pp. 784, 785. Grotius on Luke xiii. 1.

The word *Tetrarch*, implies a governor of a fourth part of a country. But it was sometimes otherwise applied, as it is here by the Evangelist; for Herod (the father) divided his kingdom only into *three* parts. Tetrarchs were however considered as princes, and sometimes were complimented even with the name of kings.

Beausobre and L'Enfant's Introduction, p. 123.

(To be continued.)

ON DOXOLOGIES.

To the Editor of the Christian Disciple.

SIR,

As protestant christians of all denominations professedly embrace the scriptures of the Old and New Testament as worthy of all acceptation, and as the only infallible rule of faith and practice, is it not desirable that they should agree in allowing that scriptural expressions, in relation to doxologies, are entitled to more respect than those of human inventions? Is it not also a question of very serious import, whether scriptural doxologies have not an obligatory claim to our practical regard? Is it not then much to be regretted, that a departure from scriptural words and phrases, with respect to this subject, should so frequently take place in our religious assemblies, and such words and phrases substituted, as by many devout worshippers, are considered as highly improper, and as derogating from that respect which is due to the scriptures, and to their divine Author? With the view to ex-

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cite a more serious attention to this subject, I shall furnish you with a collection of all the doxologies I have discovered in the New Testament; which you will have the goodness to publish, should you think the publication will be contributory to the improvement and benefit of the Christian Disciple.

DOXOLOGIES.

Of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen. Rom. xi. 36.

Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began—to God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ, forever. Amen. Rom. xvi. 25, 27.

Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. xv. 57.

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort. 2 Cor. i. 3.

To God and our Father, be glory forever and ever. Amen. Gal. i. 4, 5.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. Eph. i. 3.

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. Eph. iii. 20, 21.

Now unto God and our Father be glory forever and ever. Amen. Philip. iv. 20.

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. 1 Tim. i. 17.

The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see—to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen. 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16.

The Lord shall deliver me—to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. 2 Tim. iv. 18.

Now the God of peace, &c.—to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. Heb. xii. 20, 21.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation. 1 Pet. i. 3, 4, 5.

The God of all grace—to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. 1 Pet. v. 10, 11.

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to him be glory both now and forever. Amen. 2 Pet. iii. 18.

Now unto him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. Jude 24, 25.

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Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Rev. i. 5, 6.

Glory, and honor, and thanks to him who sitteth on the throne, who liveth forever and ever.—Rev. iv. 9.

Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever. Rev. v. 13.

Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. Rev. vii. 10.

Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen. Rev. vii. 12.

Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power unto the Lord our God. Rev. xix. 1.

In addition to the above, the following texts, by making some verbal alterations, may be considered as doxologies: Rom. vii. 25. Eph. v. 20. 1 Pet. iv. 11. Rev. iv. 11. Rev. xi. 13, and 17.

The doxologies or ascriptions in the above quoted texts, are the whole, it is believed, which are contained in the New Testament scriptures; and as they were, "given by inspiration of God," it ought readily to be admitted, that they are neither deficient nor redundant, either as to words or object. Can it *reasonably* be pretended, that in doxologies any words can be used, which are more correct or more expressive of the mind and will of God, than those which were suggested by his own Spirit? Or can it reasonably be urged, that christians are required to use doxologies, which convey ideas not warranted by any one of those which were inspired?

The writer of this article has no desire to injure the feelings of any of his brethren by exhibiting the doxologies in common use at this day in contrast with those which have been quoted from the pages of inspiration. He would, however, most respectfully and affectionately invite the attention of christians to the subject. He thinks a little candid reflection will convince any person of discernment, that the contrast is of such a nature, as must imply defect or error, either in those doxologies given by inspiration, or in some of those which have been substituted in their room; and he devoutly hopes, that the defect or error will be sought out and corrected. Why was the Holy Spirit omitted in every inspired doxology? Must there not have been some weighty reason for this omission? Will it be safe for us to *suppose a defect* in the scriptures in this particular, and to *supply the defect* by *adding to God's word?* May we not with more safety to ourselves, more respect for the scriptures, and more reverence for that Divine Being, by whom they were inspired, adopt the doxologies as they now stand in the sacred pages, and suspend all attempts to *mend* them, until we shall have further revelations on the subject?

As these queries are highly interesting and important, it is devoutly hoped, that they will be allowed a correspondent consideration. Should this hope be happily realized, the writer of

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this is fully persuaded that the consequences will be such, as to gladden the hearts of many experimental, and orthodox christians. N——E.

ON HUMILITY IN THE INVESTIGATION OF CHRISTIAN TRUTH.

Continued from page 94.

In the last number I proposed to consider the nature and properties of that humility, which we ought to carry with us into our investigation of christian truth. I observed, that this humility is founded in a conviction of our *ignorance*, and of our *exposure* to *error;* and I offered several remarks to impress the sentiment, that we are very ignorant and very fallible beings. I now come to consider the *influence which this conviction should have on our temper and conduct.* In this, humility chiefly consists. The mere conviction of our ignorance and fallibility is of little value. Every man in a degree possesses it. Every man will tell you, and tell you with sincerity, that his views are narrow, that he has often erred, that there are many things too vast to be grasped, many too intricate to be traced, and many too subtle to be detected by his imperfect vision. Still all men are not humble. It is one thing to admit a truth, and another to reduce it to *practice.* Now it is a *practical* regard to the sentiments which I have endeavoured to illustrate, which constitutes humility. We are humble only, as far as we possess and discover the *disposition and habits* which these sentiments are suited to produce. What then are these dispositions and habits?

1. A *strong and operative desire of extending and improving our views of christian truth* may be mentioned as the first disposition, which ought to spring from a conviction of our ignorance and fallibility. Do we know little? then we should labor to know more. Of what avail is it to feel our mental wants, if we do not strive to supply them? Of what avail to reflect on the little progress we have made, unless we are induced to quicken our steps? Christians are too apt to think, that there is virtue in merely perceiving and lamenting their imperfections. But the humility, which stops here, is unworthy the name. It may even prove injurious, by weakening the tone of the mind, and rendering it abject and desponding. True humility does not spend its time and strength in brooding with motionless and unavailing grief over its many imperfections. It is a spring of exertion. It teaches us indeed to count our present attainments trifling—but not to despise our nature and faculties. Of these we cannot think or speak too highly. They bear the signature of God, the indications of immortality, for they are capable of endless improvement.——Christians! it is true, that your knowledge of religion is very limited. This you should feel; but at the same moment remem-

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ber, that your knowledge may be extended, and that God has set no limits to the progress of your minds. Remember, that you have only begun to learn, that you are reading only the first pages of the volume of truth, and that nature, and providence, and scripture are continually offering you accessions of wisdom. Would you practise on the doctrine, that you are very ignorant and imperfect? Then strive to improve. Often place yourselves with reverent and docile minds at the feet of the great Teacher from heaven. Let all your faculties be roused by the thought, that God is speaking to you, by the lips of his Son, on subjects the most interesting and sublime. Study the divine word, as the only unerring rule of faith and practice. Collect on it the powers of your minds. Go back to the age when it was written. Borrow from history and from providence, illustrations of its difficulties. Observe its connexions; compare its various parts; and thus ever seek to extend and correct your conceptions of its doctrines. This exercise of the faculties will give richness and variety to your moral and religious knowledge. Your present dim and wavering perceptions will be changed into clear and permanent convictions. Truths which are now confessed with the lips, instead of being felt by the heart, will rise before you, as important and delightful realities.

2. *Caution in forming our religious opinions* is another habit of mind, which a sense of our ignorance and fallibility should lead us to cultivate. Are we so prone to lose our path? Then we should move with a deliberate step; we should cast round us a watchful eye; we should carry with us a salutary fear. From the present narrowness and imperfections of our minds, our first views are necessarily partial. Our first impressions are never precisely conformed to the truth. We must give ourselves time to penetrate beneath the surface; to remove from a subject what is accidentally associated with it; to survey it on every side; to examine it at different times, in different lights, and in different states of minds; or we must not hope that our decisions will be correct.——My friends, beware of precipitate judgments. Patient attention is the price of truth. You know nothing of yourselves, nothing of your mental weakness, if you hope by casual and careless thought, to attain to just and enlarged apprehensions. You have reason to doubt the correctness of your sentiments, just in proportion as you have been wanting in deliberate inquiry.

This caution of mind is particularly necessary in the investigation of subjects, which have perplexed and divided the best and wisest men. Such subjects, you may be assured, are attended with serious difficulties. Had the path been plain, so many would not have erred. Fear to tread with rashness, where the wise and good have so often gone astray.

You should above all take with you this caution in examining opinions, to which you are strongly inclined by your constitution, or education, or your condition in

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in life. On these opinions you cannot easily be impartial. It requires no common effort to rescue the understanding from the thraldom of passions and prejudices, which every thing within and around you has tended to confirm. The sentiments which were first instilled into your tender minds, and which the multitude about you are ever expressing, may indeed be true. But whether true or false, you are strongly tempted to receive them; and you should therefore weigh, with scrupulous care, the arguments, by which they are supported. If you cast a hasty glance over the world, you see whole nations receiving from their ancestors the grossest errors, and transferring to them the veneration which is cherished towards those, from whom they have been derived. If you look round on individuals at home, how many do you observe seduced from truth by their ruling passions, perhaps by passions which are very powerful in your own breasts. Can you see this, and yet feel no destrust of yourselves, no sense of your own danger, and of your own need of caution and patient research?

3. *A willingness to listen to objections* is another most important disposition, to which we are directly led by a serious consideration of our ignorance and exposure to error. This is one of the most decided marks of true humility—worth more than a thousand loud professions of our unworthiness and imperfections. I would that it were as common as it is just and honorable. Even good men are sometimes sadly deficient here. They are willing to have any thing assailed rather than their opinions. But, my friends, you say that you are fallible. Why then this reluctance to reexamine your opinions, or to hear them opposed? Why this propensity to settle down in your present convictions as undoubted truths? There are indeed great & obvious principles, so established by the scrutiny and experience of ages, so dear to all the virtuous, so accordant with the best principles of our nature, and so essential to human improvement and happiness, that we are authorized to consider them as placed beyond dispute. But how few are these truths, compared with the whole number of your opinions! Most of your sentiments rest only on probable evidence, and many have been viewed in very different lights, by men as intelligent, unprejudiced, and upright, as yourselves. Is it not more than possible, that on some of these subjects you have erred; and does not your observation of others teach you, that you may have erred on the very points, which you hold with the most unwavering confidence? How readily then should you listen to objections from men, who appear to be conscientious in their inquiries, and who dispassionately offer to you what they deem more just and beneficial sentiments, than those you have embraced? Your reluctance to submit your opinions to scrutiny is suspicious. It argues a latent fear of the result of inquiry. It is too often the refuge of conscious weakness, of timid yet stubborn error. Listen patiently to the arguments which

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are directed against your favorite sentiments. Look at them with a steady eye. Meet them in all their force. Do not examine them with a settled purpose to evade them. Be truth your single aim. Especially be not *angry* when your opinions are assailed. Many resist opposition to their sentiments, as if it were an insult. But why should you consider an honest objector as an enemy? If he attack your errors, he is an invaluable friend, and if he oppose the truth, his good intention still entitles him to respect. To repel objections with passion betrays both weakness and pride, and most effectually bars the mind against the entrance of truth.

This openness to conviction, which has now been recommended, is one of the noblest virtues. It is infinitely more valuable than learning or genius. It is the foundation of improvement, and the surest defence against error; and yet how many want it! How many hate that light, which exposes the weakness of some long cherished opinions! How many refuse to hear or to read whatever assails their favorite system! How many attach a sanctity to every doctrine they receive, and shrink from doubts, as from undisguised impiety! With all our humble confessions, what strangers are we to the weakness of our nature!

4. *Modesty in advancing and enforcing our sentiments* is another disposition which ought to spring from a sense of our ignorance and fallibility. Surely it does not become beings, so erring as we are, to claim submission, to offer ourselves as guides, to impose authoritatively our belief on other minds. Who are *we*, that we dictate so positively, menace so angrily, and labor so much to subdue the understandings of our fellow beings? Where are the seals and proofs of our infallibility? We are as weak as others; and yet we cannot rest, until we have brought them to subscribe to our decisions.

But it is said, must we not be zealous for the truth? must we not lift up our voices against error? Zeal for truth is a noble quality. But in what does it consist? In forcing our sentiments upon others? Then the fathers of the Romish church are the brightest patterns of this virtue. Genuine zeal for truth displays itself in presenting clearly and persuasively to our fellow beings the evidences of what we deem important truth. It does not storm their minds with denunciation and positive assertion; but only asks to be heard with seriousness and candor, and invites and urges them to think and to judge for themselves. This is the only influence which benevolence and humility permit you to employ over the minds of men. Beware of exerting any other. Beware of wishing to be heads, and to give the hue of your own minds to all around you. This passion for spiritual power is very common, and has done incalculable injury. It has reared and sustained many a fabric of superstition. To accomplish its end, to establish its control over the faith of mankind, it assails the timid with threats, and the credulous with confident asser-

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tions. It pours out invective on men of independent minds, and teaches the multitude to recoil from them with instantaneous horror. By these means the most galling yoke is imposed on men. Their understandings are enslaved. They dread to inquire. A tremendous account is to be rendered by those, who, instead of being clothed with humility and love, thus lord it over God's heritage, arrest the progress of the mind, and multiply obstructions in the path of truth.

5. *Candid judgment of those who differ from us* is another important habit, which all who feel their ignorance and fallibility ought to cherish. Surely beings so limited in views, and so prone to err as we are, ought not to hurl contempt and reproach on men, whose lives bear witness to their sincerity, and to whom we have nothing to object but this, that they cannot subscribe to our interpretations of scripture. Christian, what is the mighty crime, for which you denounce and exclude your brother? Is it difference of sentiment? But does *he* differ more from you, than *you* from him? Do you say, he is in error? But has he not capacity equal to yours? Is not his life as blameless? Is not *your* mind exposed as well as his to unfavorable biasses? How then are you sure, that *you* are not the wanderer, that *you* do not need from others the tenderness and forbearance, which you are so prone to withhold? But grant that your brother has erred in judgment—is this a ground of condemnation? To err is human. The best christian is not free from mistake. Good men have often adopted injurious opinions. Who that belongs to such a race will presume to take the seat of judgment, and pronounce on his brother, to whose heart he is a stranger, and whose life is irreproachable, that his errors are the fruits of a depravity, which deserves the vengeance of God, the censures of the church, and the abhorrence of christians?

Lastly—*Earnest prayer* is another important habit, to which we should be led by a knowledge of our blindness and errors. God is the father of lights, the source of wisdom, ever present to our minds, and able to guide us to the truth. In his word, he invites us to ask wisdom, and by an unseen influence he will enlighten the humble suppliant, and preserve him from all fatal error. Let devotion be united with all our studies. The conviction which devotion will cherish, that the operations of our minds are always naked and open to the eye of God, will do more than any other means to repress every corrupt bias, and to give uprightness to our inquiries.

Thus I have endeavoured to unfold that humility, which should attend our pursuit of divine truth. May God dispose us to cherish and practise it. For want of this, the world is filled with error, the church is broken into factions, christians are alienated, and the gospel of peace becomes the instrument of enmity and discord. Let the words of the Lord Jesus be written on our hearts—"He that exalteth himself shall be abased, but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

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EXTRACTS FROM "CHRISTIAN MORALS, BY HANNAH MORE."

"Prejudice, if not altogether invincible, is perhaps the most difficult of all errors to be eradicated from the human mind. By disguising itself under the respectable name of firmness, it is of infinitely slower extirpation than actual vice."—

"Yet though it may incidentally be attached to a good man, there are few errors more calculated to estrange the heart from vital religion, because there are none under which men rest so satisfied. Under the practice of any immorality they are uneasy, and that uneasiness may lead to a cure; for the light of natural conscience is sufficiently strong to shew, that sin and peace cannot dwell together. But prejudice effectually keeps a man from inquiring after truth, because he conceives that he is in full possession of it, and that he is following it up in the very error that keeps him so wide of it. Or if, with the Roman governor, he ask "what is truth," like him he turns away for fear of an answer.

"Even probity itself is not of sufficient force to guide our conduct; we see men of sound integrity and of good judgment, on subjects where prejudice does not intervene, acting, where it does, below the standard of ordinary men, governed by a name, carried away by a sound. It makes lovers of truth unjust and converts wisdom into fatuity. It must therefore be an enlightened probity, or we may be injuring our fellow creatures, when we persuade ourselves we are doing God service. Paul does not appear to have been a profligate, but to have been correct, zealous, and moral, and to have earned a high reputation among his own narrow and prejudiced sect. His error was in his judgment. The error of Peter was in his affections. A sudden touch of self-love in this vacillating, but warm-hearted disciple, made him dread to share in his Master's disgrace. But in this case, a single penetrating glance melted his very soul, brought him back to contrition, repentance, and love. To cure the prejudices of Paul a miracle was necessary."

"We should not however very severely censure any for the mere opinion they form, this being a matter of the judgment, rather than of the will; the true object of censure is their conduct under this false impression, in acting as hostilely as if their opinion was founded on the best ascertained facts. If we are all more or less prejudiced, it does not follow, that the conscientious act upon the feelings which the prejudice has excited. The harsh and the intolerant, indeed, let loose upon their adversaries all the bad passions, which this disposition to prejudge opinions has stirred up; while the mild spirit, in which christianity governs, will conduct itself with the same general kindness, as if no diversity of opinion subsisted." Ch. x.

The work, from which the foregoing extracts were taken, has recently been published in this country. This first American edition is however copied

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from the *fourth* London edition, which circumstance shows the celebrity of the work in Great Britain. The remarkable talents and industry of this female are not more to be admired, than the amiable spirit of piety and benevolence, which appears in her writings. We hope her "Christian Morals" will have a salutary effect on the minds and manners of christians in this land. As the subject is of great importance, and one in which all classes of people are concerned, it is a matter of regret, that the style is not more adapted to the capacities of the unlearned.

In recommending the work, we do not become responsible for the correctness of every opinion entertained by the author. The best writers and the best writings are not free from imperfections; and for a person to treat a pious book with disregard, because it happens to contain a few thoughts inconsistent with his own opinions, is a mark of an inconsiderate, disingenuous, illiberal, and unchristian temper.

POETRY.

SELF-DEDICATION.

ALMIGHTY Author of surrounding worlds,
Parent of man, for whose delight and use
This earth was made so fruitful and this sun
Taught to diffuse his vernal light and heat,
Through ev'ry part of his extensive sphere!
Oh thou, who gavest life and still preserv'st,
Who would'st that every one should quit his sins
And sorrows, and rejoice in peace with thee!
Permit, that I, with reverential love
And awe profound, approach thy sacred throne.
Oh, my lov'd Lord, my bosom sighs for peace;
My trembling spirit shuns these changing scenes;
Warm'd with the hope thy precious word inspires,
I quit my late affections, wishes, fears,
And ask alone, to be receiv'd by thee.
No claim I bring; to mercy I appeal,
And trust the goodness which can never fail.

When I reflect on all thy tender love,
How through my youth thy pity was display'd,
Think that my present being owes to thee
I'ts sense of pleasure, and immortal hopes,
Oppress'd with joy, with gratitude and shame,
I own my meanness not deserves thy care.
But most when I survey the wond'rous truths,
Which thy vast wisdom has display'd to view,
And read salvation in thy page divine,
My bosom teems with rapture, and I clasp
The holy volume to my throbbing heart.
Lives there a wretch so lost to happiness,
Who can reject its venerable laws,
Its virtuous precepts, consolations sweet,
And promises of everlasting joy?
His be the world's delusions. Give to me
Truths which contain the only guide to bliss.

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But though I hold them sacred, and rely
In stedfast hope on their fulfilment, yet,
Almighty Lord, with penitential tears,
I mourn the vile propensity to sin
Which draws me still to this world, and to death.
Rais'd by my hopes, or yielding to my fears,
One hour I soar to regions of delight,
The next, sink down to folly and to guilt.
Oh, thou, alone, canst end this painful strife;
Bid my faint heart take courage and be firm,
Direct my wishes, urge my best resolves,
And be at once, my Sov'reign and my Guide.
'Tis thee, alone, my famish'd soul desires;
Tir'd of the world, myself, and all beneath,
I seek communion with my Saviour God,
Sav'd by redeeming grace from endless woe;
Lur'd by the brightness of thy light divine,
To feast my mind with knowledge, and secure
Pleasures above the reach of time and change;
Taught by thy gospel where true joys are found,
And how obtain'd, my longing spirit seeks
The plenteous fountain whence those streams proceed. [cline
Oh, then, with condescending ear, in-
To my petition. Thou hast promis'd, Lord,
That those who seek shall find. The broken heart
And contrite mind, are welcome still to thee.
Oh, look on mine! And if aught there be found
Which bears the stamp of truth and penitence,
Accept, for mercy's sake, the humble gift.
Nor dare I doubt thy goodness. All that man
Can ask, thou, Father, freely wilt bestow.
All-gracious God! thou know'st my love to thee.
Thou know'st that my sad heart, o'ercharg'd with grief,
Seeks no resort but thee; and when around
Each object a deluding aspect wears,
If thou be absent, every pleasure fades.
Henceforth, my life, and all that makes that life
Desirable, to thee I dedicate.
If grief be here my lot, I bow resign'd,
Such, Lord, is all the portion I deserve;
But, if a future state of joy and peace
Thy mercy doth prepare, thou too wilt find
Expression to declare thy wond'rous love.
Sooth'd by this hope, I quit my anxious fears,
And trust in him, from whom I hold my life,
That when eternity shall ope her gates,
I too may join with saints to praise his name.

MASSACHUSETTS BIBLE SOCIETY.

THIS Society was instituted 6th July, 1809. From a Report prepared by the Executive Committee for the anniversary of the Society, June 4, 1812, it appears, that the following Bibles had been distributed from the establishment of the Society unto that time, viz.

344	Octavo Bibles,
8	Minion Bibles,
2711	Common Bibles,
664	Testaments,
Making 3727	

In that Report particular mention was made of a donation of 100 pounds sterling from the British and Foreign Bible Society; also of donations from the President of the Society, His Honor William Phillips Esq. amounting to 1500 dollars.

At the last anniversary, June 3, 1813, was presented the following

REPORT.

THE Executive Committee of the Bible Society of Massachusetts, in compliance with the vote of the trus-

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tees, appointing them to prepare a report for the anual meeting on June 3d, 1813, respectfully offer the following statement of the proceedings of the last year.

Since the last anniversary, your Committee have distributed

28 Octavo Bibles,
101 Minion Bibles,
1343 Common Bibles,
235 Testaments,

Making 1707

These Bibles have been distributed very generally by settled ministers, who have inquired into the wants of their parishes, and who have had every opportunity of making a judicious distribution. A number have been entrusted to missionaries, and have thus found their way into the most destitute parts of the country. A few have been distributed by private hands.

Your committee have not considered themselves authorized by the state of the funds, to extend their exertions to a great distance. Very few Bibles have been sent beyond New England; most of them have been distributed in this state, and the remainder principally in Rhode Island. Some have been placed on board the United States ship Congress, and the prison ship near Charlestown. An application was made to this Society from a similar institution in Ohio, stating the very destitute condition of that region. The trustees, after considering the difficulties of transporting Bibles to that distance in the present state of the country, voted a grant of a hundred dollars, as the best form in which their aid could be conveyed.

Your committee report, that, from the want of funds, they have been obliged to relinquish the distribution of Octavo Bibles, although it has been their earnest desire to obtain a supply of these, for the aged and other persons, who cannot read the common Bible. They lament, that they have not been able to furnish the poor generally with books of a larger and clearer type, than those in ordinary use. They hope soon, however, to be furnished with a more legible impression of the scriptures from the stereotype plates, which the Philadelphia Bible Society have lately imported. Your committee have the pleasure to state, that the Bibles, which they have distributed, have uniformly been received with gratitude. A gentleman from Maine states, "The Bibles sent into this region have from great numbers met a grateful reception. I myself have heard families express their thankfulness to the Massachusetts Bible Society, and I have good evidence, that, after living for years without a Bible, it has become a family book and is read with a good degree of attention." Another writes, "Perhaps no other present so uniformly excites undissembled joy and gratitude, as that of the Bible. Many, who seemed unable to express the gratitude they felt, have said, "Thank the Bible Society." This eager reception of the Bible is one of the best rewards of our exertions, and a powerful motive to perseverance. We are not laboring in vain. Could we enter the dwellings of the poor, we hope, that we should discover not a few, who have been instructed, edified, and comforted by the word of life, which we have been permitted to impart to them.

The motives for continuing our exertions are too numerous to be stated with any distinctness. One very important and affecting consideration is, that there is a great need of Bibles. To those, who have been accustomed to see the Bible from their infancy, and have considered it an essential part of a domestic establishment, this fact may appear doubtful. But nothing can be better supported. There is now a great number of families in this country, which have no Bibles, or only defaced and imperfect copies. Your committee have again and again received letters from ministers, expressing their surprize at the number of families in their parishes in which this want exists. They have heard of many settlements in Maine, in which only one or two Bibles could be found. An intelligent missionary in Rhode Island thus writes, "The 150 Bibles which the Society were pleased to commit to me, were not sufficient to supply half of the destitute families in

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the towns in which I distributed them. They were like a partial shower passing through a widely extended country, withered and parched with drought." How affecting the consideration, that in this christian land, so many children should be trained up, and so many parents grow old and die, without possessing the Bible. On every side of us are fellow beings, who want the best blessing which God has bestowed on men, and which, with very little trouble and expense, we can communicate to them.

Bibles are not only wanted in many poor families, but still more in our garrisons and ships of war. Some of these have received Bibles from government, but the supply is in no measure adequate to the demand. In England great efforts are made to furnish soldiers and seamen with the word of God; and officers of distinction have born testimony to the happy influence of these pious efforts.

But even if there were no demand for Bibles among ourselves, there would still remain a wide field for the exertions of this Society. When we look beyond our own country, we behold vast and almost innumerable multitudes, who bear the christian name, but who want the means of obtaining the sacred volume. True, they are inhabitants of distant regions; but still they are fellow christians, perhaps poor and oppressed, yet many of them able to read the word of God, and most eager to receive it.

No sincere christian can need arguments to convince him, that he is bound to contribute to the diffusion of christianity through the world. This is a religion designed for all nations. Jesus Christ commanded his diciples to preach it to every creature under heaven; and shall *we* do nothing in aid of this great design? Is the gospel the appointed instrument of God for restoring the world to purity and peace? Has the Son of God died to impart this invaluable blessing to our race? Have holy men of all ages toiled and suffered to diffuse it through the earth, and to perpetuate it to unborn generations; and shall *we* do nothing to extend the knowledge and power of this salutary truth, of the word of eternal life?

To excite us to this most christian work we have an example, which, on this anniversary, ought never to be forgotten. Your committee refer to the British and Foreign Bible Society, that wonderful institution, the glory of our age. The exertions of this Society surpass all praise. Its branches are spread through the whole kingdom. Auxiliary societies, patronized by the most distinguished and venerable men of the country, and including christians of all denominations, are springing up with astonishing rapidity. No charity in the world was ever espoused with equal zeal. Christians of all classes, from the sovereign on the throne to the common laborer, are uniting their exertions to spread the Bible, not only through their own nation, but though the world. Already this divine light has beamed from Great Britain over a large part of Europe. It has penetrated and cheered the frozen regions of the north, and even Asia and Africa are sharing in its reviving influences; and shall *we* do nothing, when our fellow christians are doing so much? Shall the honor, the happiness, the rewards of such efforts be confined to others, whose obligation is certainly not stronger than our own?

It is indeed true, that our ability to promote the object now recommended, is diminished by the war in which we are involved. But still, how many among us can contribute at least enough to purchase one Bible for the destitute, and how many can contribute more? We should remember that God's blessing on our suffering nation is not to be obtained, by giving up the few exertions, which we have hitherto made for the diffusion of christianity. Perhaps one cause of the frowns of providence upon our land is this, that we have so ungratefully neglected to employ our prosperity and our connexions with other nations for the religious improvement of the world. We have visited all regions, and enriched ourselves with the productions of every clime But where have we given aid to the cause

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of christianity? Through what nation have we helped to spread the word of God, the good tidings of salvation by Jesus Christ?

In the present convulsed and disordered state of the world, it is most consoling and cheering to see so many christians, of different countries and different denominations, forgetting their divisions, and uniting in one great effort, for making known the scriptures to every nation under heaven. Like the rainbow in a dark and stormy sky, this is a promise of a brighter and happier day. It is suited to carry forward our thoughts to that predicted period, when the knowledge of God shall fill the earth, and all nations be joined in love to their common Father and Redeemer, and to one another. We should rejoice, that it is the design of providence to effect this revolution by the instrumentality of christians, and we should esteem it our privilege and happiness, that we may bear a part in this inexpressibly sublime and merciful work of God.

W. E. CHANNING, *Chairman.*

The officers of the Massachusetts Bible Society, elected June, 1813.

His Honor WILLIAM PHILLIPS, *President,*
Rev. JOHN LATHROP, D.D. *Vice President,*
Rev. SAMUEL C. THACHER, *Corresponding Secretary,*
Rev JOHN PIERCE, *Recording Secretary,*
Mr. JOHN TAPPAN, *Treasurer,*
Mr. JOHN GREW, *Assistant Treasurer.*

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Rev. James Freeman, D. D.	Joseph Hurd, Esq.
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Rev. Joshua Huntington,	Hon. William Brown,
Samuel Salisbury, Esq.	Hon. Isaac Parker,
Hon. Thomas Dawes,	Hon. Peter C. Brooks,
John Tucker, Esq.	Dea. John Simpkins.

Donations the past year, omitted by mistake in the Report.

Dea. David Weld (Roxbury)	10 00
Rev. Peter Whitney (Quincy)	3 00
Dr. Edward A. Holyoke (Salem)	7 00
Rev. John Pierce, collected in a Cent Society in Brookline	39 33
From two ladies in Medfield, by the hands of Rev. Dr. Prentiss,	6 50
Rev. Mr. Thomson (Rehoboth), collected by him	3 00
Rev. Thomas Andross (Berkley) Do.	3 50
Warren Dutton, Esq. (Boston)	5 00
Anonymous, by the hands of Rev. Mr. Greenough, (Newton)	8 00
A young lady in Franklin, through the hands of Rev. Dr. Emmons	5 00
Hon. Peter C. Brooks, second donation	50 00
Rev. John Pierce, collected in a Cent Society, 2d collection	38 56
Samuel Salisbury, Esq. (yearly subscription)	50 00

Ordination.

July 14, 1813, the Rev. JOHN L. ABBOTT was ordained to the pastoral care of the first church and congregation in Boston.

Candidates for the ministry, recently approbated.

Mr. JOSEPH HAVEN, and Mr. NATHANIEL WHITMAN, Cambridge.

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THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

No. 5. *SEPTEMBER*, 1813. Vol. I.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF THE REV. JOHN HOWE.

Continued from p. 102.

Mr. Howe, having been about five years in Ireland, received a very pressing invitation to return to England, and settle in the ministry in the city of London. This circumstance naturally implies, that the restraints laid on the dissenters had been in some degree removed. The call to London was received by Mr. Howe, as a matter which deserved the most serious consideration. Prior to giving any answer, he took a voyage to that place, to make particular inquiry as to the prospects of usefulness. On this occasion he committed some things to writing, which have been preserved. By this private paper it very clearly appears, what were the thoughts and meditations of his heart, in view of that unexpected occurrence; the concern he felt, lest he should be too much influenced to a decision in favor of complying with the call, from improper motives, and undue regard to popularity and wealth. In this singular paper a number of questions are stated, and answered in a course of self examination. It also contains a number of considerations, designed for the comfort of his wife and other relations, in case he should be called by death, in the course of his voyage; from which it appears, that he lived as became a dying creature, and that he contemplated the event of his own dissolution without terror or dismay.

The third query in his self-examination was this—"Am I not afraid of miscarrying—by shipwreck, &c.—To this question he answers in six particulars; the following are the 4th, 5th, and 6th.

"4. It is pleasant to me hereupon to think of going into eternity; of laying down the body of flesh, and sin, and death together; and of being perfectly holy, and associated with them that are so in holy work and enjoyment."

"5. To put off this tabernacle so easily, I reckon would to me be a merciful dispensation, who am more afraid of sharp pains than of death. I think I should joyfully embrace those waves that should cast me on an undesigned shore, and when I intend-

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ed *Liverpool*, should land me in *heaven*.

"6. Yet I bless God, I have no weariness of life, nor of his work in this world, if he shall yet please to employ me here."

In the consolations for his wife and other relations, we have eight particulars—three of which will be quoted.

"6. I have, through the grace of God, preached immortal truth, which will survive, and may be to your advantage.

"7. As to you, who have dependence on me for worldly concerns; I was never a good projector for the world; so the loss is not great. How many dear to God, make a shift in a worse condition! Forget not the motto, *God will provide*. He that feeds ravens, and takes care of sparrows, will he not take care of you? Are you of his family, and will he not take care of his own? Instead of distrust and repiniug, give *thanks*. O bless him with all your soul, that he hath revealed and given himself to you for an everlasting portion; and whose covenant is to be your God, and the God of yours.

"8. Let it be some satisfaction to you, that I go willingly, under no dread, with no regret, but with some comfortable knowledge of my way and end."

The call to settle in London he accepted, and in the course of his ministry in that place he was eminently useful and highly respected.

For several years there was some relaxation of the laws, which affected the dissenters, but in 1681 they were rigorously enforced, and this rigor and intolerance continued for several succeeding years. However, during these perilous times Mr. Howe published several discourses, and wrote an exposition of the three epistles of John, which was published in the second volume of Mr. Pool's Annotations; he being one of the continuators of Pool's work.

In 1683 Lord Russel was beheaded, who was by Mr. Howe considered as an eminently good man. On this occasion he wrote a very long letter to the bereaved widow, in which he discovered the spirit of christian sympathy, and eminent talents for comforting the afflicted. In 1684 Bishop Barlow, of Lincoln, published a letter, pressing the execution of the laws against the dissenters. Mr. Howe wrote a private and anonymous letter to the Bishop, which was published. This letter was written with ability, and a most excellent temper. If the Bishop were not past feeling, he must have been filled with trembling, or deep regret, on reading the epistle. Mr. Howe suggested to him that he must know, that a compliance with his orders would be the ruin of many, as to their temporal interest, "and not that only, but deprive them of the advantages appointed by our blessed Lord, for promoting their spiritual and eternal well being." He proceeded thus: "How well would this practice agree with that apostolic precept 'Him that is weak in the faith receive, but not to doubtful disputations.' I know not how your lordship would relieve yourself in this case, but by saying they were

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not weak nor conscientious, but wilful and humorsome. But what shall then be said to the subjoined expostulation, 'Who art thou, that judgest thy brother?' We must, it seems, understand all this rigor your lordship shows, to proceed from *love*, and that you are for *destroying* the dissenters only to *mend their understandings*. But for the purposes your lordship seems to aim at, I wonder what you can expect. Can you by undoing men, change the judgment of their consciences? Or if they should tell you, we do indeed in our consciences judge, that we shall greatly offend God by complying with your injunctions, yet to save being undone we will do it; will this qualify them for your communion? But if you have misjudged, or misdone against your judgement, I pray God to rectify your error by gentler means, and by less affliction than you have designed to your brethren."

"In 1685 the dissenters were run down almost universally, and hardly any one durst speak or write in their favor," and the prospects every day grew more and more gloomy. Mr. Howe, therefore, having an invitation from lord Wharton, to go with him into foreign parts, readily accepted it. After he arrived in another country he wrote a letter to the people, whom he had been constrained to leave. In this, he gave them most excellent advice, and endeavoured to comfort them under the trials they endured from a persecuting spirit. It would be gratifying to us, had we room for it, to lay this letter in full before our readers. But we must content ourselves with giving but a short extract from a long epistle. In urging his persecuted brethren to maintain a meek, humble, and patient temper, and to forbear every thing of a bitter or revengeful spirit under their sufferings, he writes thus: "Oh the gentleness, kindness, tenderness, and compassionateness of the evangelical, truly christian spirit, as it most eminently appeared in our Lord Jesus Christ himself! And we are told, if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his. How easy and pleasant is it to one's own self to be void of all wrathfulness, and vindictive designs or inclinations towards any other man? For my own part, I should not have that peace and consolation in a suffering condition, as through the goodness of God I *have found*, and *do find*, in being conscious to myself of no other than kind and benign thoughts towards them I have suffered by, and that my heart tells me, that I desire not the least hurt to them that would do me the greatest; and that I feel within myself an unfeigned love and high estimation of divers, accounting them pious, worthy persons, and hoping to meet them in the all reconciling world, who are yet through some mistake, too harsh towards us who dissent from them; and in all things of this nature, I pray that you and I may abound more and more."

In 1687, king James published a declaration in favor of liberty of conscience. Upon this Mr. Howe's friends in London

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earnestly entreated him to return from exile. He most readily complied with their wishes, and great was the joy on meeting again after so long separation and such severe trials.

The next year placed the Prince of Orange on the British throne. While in Holland Mr. Howe became acquainted with this prince, and was treated by him with particular respect. When he obtained the government of Britain, the dissenting ministers waited on him; and Mr. Howe, in their behalf, made to the king a congratulatory address, in which he expressed great satisfaction in his accession to the throne, and great confidence in his character.

In the year 1689 some bills were brought under the consideration of parliment, which, if enacted, must deeply injure the dissenters, deprive them of privileges, and fix a stigma upon them. On this occasion Mr. Howe published a short pamphlet, entitled "the case of the dissenters represented and argued." In this paper ability, independence, and the spirit of meekness, were happily combined. One paragraph only will be quoted, but this is worthy to be written in letters of gold, and to be imprinted on the hearts of every sect of christians, as with the point of a diamond. Speaking on the subject of an exclusive sacramental test, he wrote thus—"But we would fain know whose is this holy table? Is it the table of *this* or *that party*, or the LORD'S TABLE? If the Lord's, are not persons to be admitted or excluded on his terms? Never can there be union or peace in the christian world, till we take down our arbitrary enclosures, and content ourselves with those our common Lord hath set. If he falls under a curse, that alters a *man's* landmark; to alter *God's*, is not likely to infer a blessing."

After much debate, an act of toleration was obtained, very favorable to the dissenters, and which was the occasion of great joy. But fearing that a proper use would not be made of the blessing of liberty, Mr. Howe published another piece, which was entitled, "humble requests, both to the conformists and dissenters." Here again both the abilities and goodness of the writer were displayed. His requests were seven, each of which was illustrated. The heads of the requests were thus expressed:—

"1. That we do not over magnify our differences, or count them greater than they really are.

"2. Let us carefully abstain from judging each other's state Godward upon these differences."

"3. Let us not value ourselves upon being of this or that side of the severing line.

"4. Let us not despise one another for our differing in these lesser matters.

"5. Nor let us *wonder* that we *differ*.

"6. Let us not be mutually offended with one another.

"7. But above all, let us with sincere minds more earnestly endeavour the promoting of the interest of religion itself, of true

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reformed christianity, than of this or that party."

Each of these particulars was illustrated and enforced in a manner which does honor, both to the head and heart of the writer.

But notwithstanding this pious advice, difficulties arose among the dissenting ministers, which gave farther occasion for the exertions of Mr. Howe. He published a discourse on the *carnality of christian contention*, which was highly applauded. To this discourse he wrote a long preface, in which he proposed the following things for consideration, and expressed his own opinion on each, with great freedom and plainness.

"1. Whether for any party of christians to make to itself other limits of communion, than Christ hath made, be not in itself a *real sin?*

"2. If it be a *sin*, is it not a *heinous* one?

"3. If we suppose this a sin and a heinous one, how far doth the guilt of it spread?

"4. How few that consider this as the provoking cause of Christ's being so much a stranger to the christian church; and how little is it to be hoped we shall ever see good days till this wasting evil is redressed!"

The questions here proposed are of the most serious nature. They demand an attentive and thorough consideration. It is hoped they will not be hastily passed over by any sect of christians in our land. On inquiry it may perhaps be found, that every sect of christians has "made to itself other limits of communion than Christ hath made;" that "this is a real sin, and a heinous one;" that as this sin has been the occasion of much ungodly contention, it may have been the "provoking cause of Christ's being so much a stranger" in our churches; and that we have little reason to hope we "shall see good days till this wasting evil is redressed."

It is not a light thing for uninspired men, men too who are constantly liable to be misled by their prejudices, to set up terms of communion in the church which are not warranted by clear precepts or declarations from the lips of Christ or his apostles. But so many, and so various are the terms of communion, established by the different sects of christians, that there is not *one* person in the land who is not, by one sect or an other, excluded from the privilege of a christian. Not only so, should Christ and his apostles visit the churches in New England, as strangers from a foreign country, they would probably find, in the greater part of the churches, terms of communion by which *they* would be excluded, unless they would consent to such terms as they never instituted. Should they attend the several associations and presbyteries, to obtain recommendations as preachers of the gospel, and should be required to express their opinions in relation to the several confessions of faith, it may be doubted whether they would obtain approbation from one to five of these ecclesiastical bodies.

If the exhibition of Mr. Howe's sentiments, on the terms of christian communion, should be the

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means of turning the attention of christians in this country from human systems to the gospel of Christ, great good may result to the churches; and the time may speedily come, when Christ "shall not be so much of a stranger among them," and when peace and friendship shall be established in the room of unchristian animosity.

AN EXTRACT FROM R. ROBINSON.

"WHICH of the ten commandments does a man break, by following his own convictions in religion? Is any of us less wise, less just, or less safe, because another does that for himself, which we every day do for ourselves? Our safety is not endangered by his taking the liberty to think for himself. It is *we* who endanger *his* safety, by taking the liberty to think for him. In such a case, we should be less wise and less just than we ought to be; as he would be if he allowed us to run our liberty into such licentiousness. How is it that men, christian men too, can see one another's sicknesses, and hear of one another's misfortunes, without any emotions of anger, and with all the feelings of humanity and pity that christians ought to have for one another; and that they cannot bear to hear a conscientious man avow sentiments different from their own without a red resentment, that, like a hot thunderbolt, hisses, and wounds, and kills where it falls? No; it is not justice, it is not prudence, it is not humanity, it is not benevolence, it is not zeal for these dispositions; it seems as if it were the explosion of an infected heart, where the milk of human kindness never flowed. If such emotions can proceed from christians, we must suppose what we are loath to think; that is, that some christians are, in some unhappy moments, divested of all the principles of their holy religion, and actuated by the dispositions of the most ignorant and cruel of mankind. But, say they, though *we* receive no injury, yet *God* is dishonored? Ah! is God dishonored? imitate his conduct then; does he thunder, does he lighten, does he afflict this poor man? Behold his sun enlightens his habitation, his rain refreshes his fields, his gentle breeze fans and animates him every day, his revelation lies always open before him, his throne of mercy is ever accessible to him; and will you, rash christian, will *you* mark him out for vengeance? I repeat it again, imitate your heavenly Father."

CONSOLATION FOR PIOUS PARENTS ON THE DEATH OF CHILDREN.

"I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." DAVID.

THE idea of immortality is indeed delightful, when connected with the hope of everlasting union with our friends. The be-

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lief that the love, which we have felt and cherished on earth, is not lost in the grave, but perfected and perpetuated in heaven, is sufficient under the most afflictive bereavements, to sustain and elevate the soul. This hope the christian enjoys, and this belief he may indulge with respect to the most worthy objects of his earthly attachments. While he beholds them descending into the grave, his soul derives comfort from the assurance, that God will gather the sleeping dust of the righteous, and that, as Christ has risen from the dead, "so he has become the first fruits of them that slept. So if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, so them also, which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him." The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the firm foundation on which we may rest our hopes of immortality, and a reunion with our friends, who die in the Lord. How comforting is the voice of our Saviour. "Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." "In my father's house are many mansions." "I go to prepare a place for you." "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." The light of nature conducts us only to the tomb, it is lost in the darkness of the grave; but our Saviour hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. These rays of the sun of righteousness irradiate the path of death, by showing its connexion with the world of immortal day and eternal life.

The words selected for the motto, were the words of David, after the death of a child. During the sickness of the child, like a penitent and pious father, he fasted and wept, and prayed for its recovery; but when the child was dead, "he arose from the earth," submissive to the divine will, "and went into the house of the Lord, and worshipped; then he came to his own house, and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, "what thing is this that thou hast done? Thou didst fast and weep for the child while it was alive, but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread." "And he said while the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, who can tell whether God will be gracious to me that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? *I shall go to him, but he will not return to me.*"

The solicitude of David for his child, his earnest wish that it might recover, was natural and proper. That it was accompanied with pious submission, we have reason to believe from the composure of his mind on hearing that the child was dead. There are feelings which parents only know; and piety has no tendency to eradicate or diminish parental love. This tender cord, by which the parent is bound to the child, is strengthened by sickness—it is not dissolved by death. When the soul of the infant departs, the spirit of the pious parent naturally seeks out the place of its abode. Having in faith resigned the depart-

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ed soul into the hands of the Father of spirits, the parent rejoices in the hope of soon seeing the child in those blessed regions, from which sin, and pain, and death, are forever excluded. With this prospect, in pious composure, he may say, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." This consideration will naturally excite the parent to greater diligence and activity in preparing for his own change.

Are pious and faithful parents bereaved of children, who are advanced from a state of infancy on the journey of life, children that have evidenced an amiable disposition, "a tenderness of conscience, a love to truth, an open, candid, benevolent heart, a tender sense of obligation, and a desire to repay it;" who were resigned in trouble, patient in sickness, and tranquil in the hour of death? Such strokes are severe, they pierce the heart, and yet there is ground of consolation. The will of God is done; but this is not all. The parents have reason to hope, that God has heard their prayers and blessed their endeavours for the good of their children. With gratitude and joy, they may lift their eyes from the earth, in which the mortal remains of their children are deposited, and direct them towards a better world, as the present abode of the deceased; and where they have joined the spirits of the just made perfect. O the consolation of believing, that while *we* are bereaved, our *children* are blessed! while we are mourning, they are rejoicing! and that too as the fruit of the divine smiles on our endeavours for their salvation. How consoling the thought, that our children are with *their* God and *our* God, who will wipe all tears from their eyes, and who will also make our affliction a mean of quickening us to duty, and of ripening us for a reunion with the dear objects of our love, in the world of bliss!

Our children attach us to the world; if they are taken one after another, let our affections be proportionably transferred to heaven. Let us keep our eyes steadily fixed on that better country, to which they are gone. Let our care and diligence for the welfare of surviving children be redoubled. What tenderness and affection did our Saviour discover towards little children, when he took them into his arms and blessed them, saying, "of such is the kingdom of heaven." Let us not by our examples *forbid* our children from coming to Christ.

If any of our children have gone before us to the celestial state, they have no wish to return to this world of sin and sorrow, but they may ardently desire that we should come and participate with them in immortal joys. Do they not beckon us to the divine abode, point out the upward track, and urge us to pursue it with diligence, vigor, and delight?

"Hark! in such strains as saints employ,
They whisper to thy bosom, peace:
Calm the perturbed heart to joy,
And bid the streaming sorrow cease.

"Then dry henceforth the bitter tear,
Their part and thine inverted see!
Thou wast *their* guardian angel here,
They guardian angels now *to thee.*"

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In a sermon on "submission to divine providence in the death of children," the pious Dr. Doddridge says, "Pious parents have reason to hope *it is well* with those dear creatures who are taken away in their early days. I see not that the word of God hath any where passed a damnatory sentence on *any infants;* and if it has not, I am sure *we* have no authority to do it; especially considering with how much compassion the divine Being speaks of them in the instance of the Ninevites, and on some other occasions. Perhaps, as some pious divines have conjectured, they may constitute a considerable part of the elect, and as in Adam they *all died*, they may in Christ *all be made alive*. At least, methinks, from the covenant which God made with Abraham and his seed, the blessings of which are come on the believing gentiles, there is reason to hope well concerning the infant offspring of God's people, early devoted, and often recommended to him, that their souls will be bound in the '*bundle of life*,' and be loved for the parents' sake."

WELL-TIMED REPROOFS.

The celebrated Mr. John Howe, being at dinner with some persons of high rank, one gentleman of the company said many things in praise of king Charles the first, and made some indecent reflections on other persons; nor had he the good manners to refrain from intermixing horrid oaths with his discourse. Mr. Howe observed, "In my humble opinion, you have omitted one very great excellency, which is generally acknowledged to belong to the prince you have so much extolled." The gentleman seemed pleased that Mr. Howe should unite with him in applauding the prince, and pressed him to name the excellence to which he referred. After considerable importunity, Mr. Howe replied, "It is this, that he was never heard to *swear* in his common conversation." The gentleman kindly accepted the reproof, and promised to forbear swearing in future.

At another time the same Mr. Howe, as he was walking abroad, heard two persons of rank *damn* each other in a shocking manner. He pulled off his hat, and saluted them with great civility; then said, "I pray God *save* you both." This reproof made such an impression, that the gentlemen united in returning him thanks for his kindness and fidelity.

ON THE WORD βλασφημια, [BLASPHEMY] BY DR. CAMPBELL.

"I proposed, in the second place, to offer a few thoughts on the import of the Greek word, frequently translated *blasphemy*. I am far from affirming, that in the present use of the English word, there is such a departure from the import of the original,

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as in that remarked in the preceding article.

"But it deserves our notice, that when the Greek word refers to reproachful speeches against God, and so comes nearer our word *blasphemy;* still the primitive notion of this crime has undergone a considerable change in our way of receiving it. The causes, it would not perhaps be difficult to investigate, but the effect is undeniable. In theological disputes, nothing is more common, to the great scandal of the christian name, than the imputation of blasphemy, thrown by each side on the other. The injustice of the charge, on both sides, will be manifest on a little reflection, which it is the more necessary to bestow, as the commonness of the accusation, and the latent, but contagious motives of employing it, have gradually perverted our conceptions of the thing.

"The Greek word comprehends all sorts of verbal abuse, imprecation, reviling, and calumny. Now let it be observed, that when such abuse is mentioned, as uttered against God, there is properly no change made in the signification of the word; the change is only in the application, that is, in the reference to a different object. The idea conveyed in the explanation, now given, is always included, against whomsoever the crime be committed. In this manner, every term is understood, that is applicable to both God and man. Thus the meaning of the word *disobey* is the same, whether we speak of disobeying God, or of disobeying man. The same may be said of *believe, honor, fear,* &c. As therefore the sense of the term is the same, though differently applied, what is essential to constitute the crime of detraction in the one case, is essential also in the other. But it is essential to this crime, as commonly understood, when committed by one man against another, that there be in the injurious person, the *will* or *disposition* to detract from the person abused. Mere mistake in regard to character, especially when the mistake is not conceived by him, who entertains it, to lessen the character, nay, is supposed, however erroneously, to exalt it, is never construed, by any into the crime of defamation. Now, as blasphemy is in essense the same crime, but immensely aggravated, by being committed against an object infinitely superior to man, what is fundamental to the existence of the crime, will be found in this, as in every other species, which comes under the general name. There can be no blasphemy, therefore, where there is not an impious purpose to derogate from the divine majesty, and to alienate the minds of others from the love and reverence of God.

"Hence, we must be sensible of the injustice of so frequently using the odious epithet *blasphemous* in our controversial writings; an evil, imputable solely to the malignity of temper, which a habit of such disputation rarely fails to produce. Hence it is, that the arminian and the calvinist, the arian and the athanasian, the protestant and the papist, the jesuit and the jansenist, throw and retort on each

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other the unchristian reproach. Yet it is no more than justice to say, that each of the disputants is so far from intending to diminish, in the opinion of others, the honor of the Almighty, that he is, on the contrary, fully conviveed, that his own principles are better adapted to raise it, than those of his antagonists, and, for that very reason he is so strenuous in maintaining them. But to blacken, as much as possible, the designs of an adversary, in order the more effectually to render his opinions hateful, is one of the many common, but detestible resources of theological controvertists. It is to be hoped, that the sense, not only of the injustice of this measure, but of its inefficacy for producing conviction in the mind of a reasonable antagonist, and of the bad impressions it tends to make on the impartial and judicious, in regard, both to the arguers and the argument, will at length induce men to more candid methods of managing their disputes; and even when provoked by calumnious and angry epithets of an opposer, not to think of retaliating; but to remember, that they will derive more honor from imitating the conduct of him, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again."

REMARKS ON THE EXTRACT FROM DR. CAMPBELL.

THE observations of Dr. Campbell on the improper conduct of controversial writers, in accusing each other of blasphemy, are worthy of the author, and deserve the most serious consideration. We sincerely hope, that the evil, of which he complained, is falling into disrepute. Nothing short of the prevalence of the christian temper will so effectually restrain men from this unreasonable practice, as a uniform expression of public sentiment against it, as *dishonorable* and *infamous*. It behoves every friend to religion to do all in his power to put an end to a custom which has so long disgraced the name of christians.

But the unfounded accusations of blasphemy are not the only things, against which the Doctor's remarks may be made to bear. There are other charges equally unfounded and injurious, in which controversial writers have indulged themselves one against another. Nor are such writers the only persons who have been guilty of this antichristian conduct. Too frequently things of a similar nature have been heard from the pulpit. This is not all, as we might naturally expect from such examples, private professors have learned the infamous dialect. Alas! how often have some of them been heard to utter the language of defamation against fellow christians, in a manner which might shock the feelings of men, who have had their education in military camps, or ships of war.

The temper, the language, and the lives of professors, should afford a daily comment on the precepts and examples of their

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Lord and Master. Nor will they be properly distinguished from the world, until the temper of Jesus so far prevails in their hearts, as to bridle their tongues, and lead them to treat one another with more decency, respect, and tenderness.

If it be, as Dr. Campbell supposed, that the practice under consideration is "an evil, imputable solely to the malignity of temper," what a shocking solecism is implied—*malignant christians! malignant followers* of the BENEVOLENT PRINCE OF PEACE! What words can be brought together to form more palpable self-contradictions? It surely behoves such professors to change either their *names* or their *manners*.

What possible inducement can any believer in divine revelation have to propagate a sentiment, which, in his own view of it, is blasphemous or reproachful to God? What private interest is to be advanced, by conduct so preposterous and abominable. Or, may we imagine that such men would act a part so wicked without even the motive of private advantage? What then can be more reasonable than the candid suppositions of the Doctor, that each writer of the different sects believes his own opinions more honorary to God, than those of his opponents? And that each one supports his sentiments under the influence of such a belief? Shall such conscientious conduct be branded with the name of *blasphemy, infidelity*, or *damnable heresy*?

Should the expected millenium arrive, when the religion of Jesus shall become universal, and have a more perfect governing influence in the hearts of men; and should the writings, which contain such horrid accusations of one sect against another, be handed down to that time, it may then be a matter of astonishment, that such writers ever so much as dreamed that they possessed the spirit of the Lord Jesus, or that, in such writings, they were influenced by love to him. How shocking is it now to us, to read in ancient history, that christian bishops excited war and bloodshed, or supported their respective opinions by the point of the sword! This however is probably not more shocking to our minds, than the practice, which Dr. Campbell has censured, will be to the minds of those who shall live in the millenial state of the church. If, then, living writers or preachers, who are chargeable with such abuse, wish to have their names regarded as belonging to the christian catalogue, when that time of love shall have arrived, does it not behove them to wipe away the reproach, by a humble confession of their faults, and by faithful exertions to counteract the contaminating and deleterious tendency of their past examples?

In proportion as people shall obtain more correct views of the christian religion, such conduct will become more and more shocking and detestable. In that wished for period of the church, it may be as difficult for christians to reconcile such a custom with the meek and benevolent spirit of the gospel, as

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it now is to us, to reconcile with the same spirit the *bloody* or the *fiery* arguments of the ancient bishops of Rome. It may require more of the spirit of delusion and the arts of sophistry, than will fall to the share of good people in the millenial state, to show how the spirit of Jesus could ever lead his ministers to think of supporting their respective opinions, and reforming their opponents, either by the edge of the sword, or by the edge of the not less carnal weapons of anathematizing denunciations and calumny.

It is truly painful to remark on such inconsistencies in the conduct of those who have been ministers of the christian religion; and more especially so, as the remarks must bear on *some*, who, in other respects, have been worthy of esteem. But being fully convinced that the practice is an evil, under the weight of which christianity *groans*, an evil which obstructs the progress of light and truth, an evil which ought to be corrected, and which *must* be corrected before christianity will appear to advantage; we were willing to second the efforts of Dr. Campbell, to put an end to practices which afford unbelievers such deadly weapons against the christian clergy. As we can account for the lamentable practice on no other ground, than that of the delusive, bewildering influence of prejudice, we hope that he who prayed for his *murderers*, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do," will, on the same principle, show more compassion to his ministers, than they have exercised one towards another.

A REMARKABLE PARAGRAPH FROM A CENTURY SERMON, BY DR. KENDAL.

"THE bill of mortality I shall exhibit is for thirty years, beginning Jan. 1, 1783, and ending Jan. 1, 1813. I have no document to enable me to extend it farther back. There stand on my records 416 deaths; from which number deduct 20 that do not properly come into the account, being only visitors, or such as had come into the town in the last stages of disease, hoping to find relief from the salubrity of the air. After this deduction the number is 396, making the annual average number thirteen and one fifth, or sixty-six in five years. Of the 396, ninety arrived at the 70th year of their age and upwards, making more than one in four and an half that arrived to what is called the common age of man. Out of the ninety who lived to this age, fifty two attained to their eightieth year, and upwards, giving more that one in eight that arrived to four score years. Of the fifty two that arrived to this age, twenty seven lived to eighty five, and upwards, giving one in fourteen and two thirds, that attained to these advanced years. Twelve lived to ninety, and upwards, making one in thirty of this very great age,

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Three lived to ninety five and upwards, giving one in one hundred and thirty two, that continued to this advanced period; and one lived to be one hundred and two years old, wanting about six weeks."

The sermon from which this paragraph was taken, was preached at Weston, Jan. 12, 1813, "on the termination of a century, since the incorporation of the town." It is chiefly historical, and must be interesting to the people of that place, and may be entertaining and useful to others.

THE AGENCY AND GRACE OF GOD IN THE CONVERSION AND SALVATION OF SINNERS, CONSISTENT WITH THE EFFICACY OF MEANS.

It is an unquestionable truth, that the conversion and salvation of sinners is, in the gospel, ascribed to the spirit, the agency, and free grace of God. Nor have we the least desire to abate in the minds of men a sense of their dependence on God, or a sense of the freeness or the riches of his grace, in the conversion and salvation of sinners. But if there be any views prevalent, relating to this subject, which are incorrect, and which operate to defeat the gracious design of the gospel, it may be important to eradicate these impressions by a clear exhibition of the truth.

The views, which we apprehend many entertain, that are of a tendency to defeat the very design of the gospel, are these—that such is the nature of the sinner's dependence on God, that nothing which he may, or can possibly do, will be of any avail to secure the divine favor, or have any tendency to bring him into a state of obedience to the gospel; and consequently, that he is just as likely to be converted in a course of neglecting the means of grace, as in a course of the most constant attention to them. It is believed, that very few preachers would say all this in plain terms, yet it may be, that the manner, in which some of them treat the subject, has a tendency to make all these impressions on the minds of their hearers. Whatever may be the intention of the preacher, if such impressions be made, do they not tend to counteract the design of the gospel, and of the ministry of reconciliation? Such impressions naturally lead those, who view themselves in a state of impeniteney, to feel in a measure justified in neglecting the duties which God has enjoined, in neglecting to attend on the ministry of the word and other means of salvation; or to feel, while they attend, as though little or nothing were depending on the manner in which they hear, read, or pray? And whether the prevailing neglect of the bible, of family worship, and even of public worship, has not originated from such unfortunate impressions, is a question, which demands the serious attention of the clergy, and of christians of every sect.

The dependence of mankind on God is not limited to the af-

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fairs of the soul. We are in all respects dependent beings. The sacred penmen were in the habit of ascribing all events, all afflictions, and all mercies, whether temporal or spiritual, to the divine hand. Nor do they more explicitly ascribe the conversion and salvation of a sinner to the agency and goodness of God, than they do the growth of corn, the blessing of food, and every other blessing which we obtain through the instrumentality of human exertions. If favors were bestowed on some persons by others, these also were ascribed to the agency of God—*God gave them favor in the eyes* of such a person, or such a people. Now this constant reference of all things to the agency and disposal of God was never designed to lead men to a course of negligence in respect to the means, by which he produces effects and bestows his blessings; but to lead them to a sense of their dependence on God for every good and perfect gift, that in all their ways they might acknowledge him by prayer, and make suitable returns of gratitude for his goodness in every favor they receive.

The conversion and salvation of sinners are ascribed to the agency of God, to the agency of ministers, to the influence of the gospel, and to the agency of the returning sinner; just as we are taught to ascribe the blessing of our daily bread to the agency of God, to the influence of the sun and rain, to the fertility of the earth, and to the agency of the husbandman.

The benefits we receive by food or medicine are all to be ascribed to God's goodness, and his blessing on the means we use, or which others use in our behalf; and all this in as strict a sense, as we should ascribe it to the grace of God, if the word preached prove effectual to the conversion of a sinner. We may be the subjects of natural diseases, which would prove fatal, if no means were used for our recovery; we may use means, or the physician may use means, that prove effectual to remove or abate the malady, and of course to preserve life. But when these good effects follow the use of means, God's hand is as really to be acknowledged, as in any spiritual blessing we receive. Nor is there the least intimation in the scriptures, that men are *more* dependent on God in the one case, than in the other. Nor is there any reason for such an intimation; for in all things we are absolutely dependent. But our dependence is not of a nature to interfere with free agency and the efficacy of means.

As sinners, we are subjects of a moral disease; a disease, which will prove fatal, if no remedy be applied. This disease is of a blinding, as well as a criminal nature. Christ is our Physician. "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." The Son has not only opened the door of salvation by the sacrifice of himself, but he has instituted means for our recovery. To carry into effect his great design he instituted the ministry of reconciliation. Accordingly we are told, that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God;" and that "whosoever call-

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eth on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Now as certain means are, by the grace of God, adapted to the purpose of healing bodily maladies, so by the same grace, means are adapted to healing the malady of the soul. As food will not nourish our bodies, unless it be received; as medicine will have no effect to heal our natural maladies, if the patient reject it, or if he counteract its natural tendency, by taking other things, or by adopting any course of conduct, inconsistent with the natural operation of the medicine; so neither will the instructions of the gospel have any saving effect, if they be rejected by the sinner, or if he suffer the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the love of other things, to choke the word. But where is the evidence from the scriptures, that the truths of the gospel are not as really adapted to the purpose of healing the diseases of the mind, as any medicine is adapted for healing the diseases of the body? What evidence is to be found, that the various means instituted in the gospel are not as really means of conversion and salvation, as any thing we do is a means of supporting or healing our bodies. It is strictly the grace and blessing of God, which connects the use of medicine with healing effects. It is the same in respect to the appointed means of salvation. And these different effects are equally the fruitof divine foreordination. As the conversion and salvation of a sinner is a greater favor than any thing of a temporal nature, so we should naturally expect, that it would be spoken of in the scriptures, as an extraordinary display of the free, sovereign grace of God.

When our Saviour was on earth, he healed bodily maladies "by the spirit of God" in a miraculous manner; but that does not prove that ordinary means and medicines are of no efficacy or utility. The spirit, or divine power and agency, may be as really concerned in giving effect to the medicines and means used by a skilful physician, as they were in giving effect to the words spoken, or the means used by our our Saviour. In a similar manner, and by the same spirit, he could instantaneously change the moral state of a person, his feelings, his views and opinions; as in the case of Zacheus, Paul, and others. But these occurrences afford no evidence against the efficacy and utility of the instructions of the gospel, as means of conversion and salvation. The same spirit which accompanied the words of Christ, and connected them with the conversion of Zacheus and Paul, may give efficacy to the ordinary means, which the same Lord has instituted for the conversion of sinners. And those who, by the ministry of the word, are brought to repent and obey the gospel, are as really and as greatly indebted to the grace of God, as though the same effects had resulted from miraculous interposition. So men who obtain their daily bread by the sweat of their brows, or by the liberality of their friends, are as really indebted to the grace of God, as were the Israelites, who received manna immediately from heaven.

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When God redeemed the people of Israel from their bondage in Egypt, he, by his providence and spirit, excited them to the use of those means which his purpose had connected with their deliverance. But their emancipation was as strictly to be ascribed to the agency and grace of God, as though he had by a miracle taken them all up into the air, transported them, and set them down again in the land of Canaan.

If these views of the subject could be suitably impressed on the minds of people in general, it is believed the consequences would be unspeakably important. Men would renounce their delusive hopes of being saved in the way of neglecting or abusing the means of salvation. A sense of their dependence on God would make them tremble at the thought of despising, or neglecting the means his grace has appointed. Bibles would be in demand; secret and family worship would be revived; parents would be engaged to impress on the minds of their children the truths and duties of religion; and the houses of public worship would be thronged with persons, inquiring, "what shall we do to be saved?" It would then appear as inconsistent for men, to hope to be saved in the neglect of the means of salvation, as it now appears, to hope that our lives would be prolonged without eating or drinking, or that the sick will be recovered without medicine or means, or that corn will grow in uncultivated ground without even the ceremony of planting.

Let the minds of husbandmen in general be fully impressed with the delusive idea, that such is the nature of divine sovereignty, and the dependence of mankind, that they are as likely to have a competency of bread, without cultivating the ground, as with the utmost care and labor; and what would be the natural consequences, but indifference, negligence, famine, and death?

It behoves us all to remember, that to be "born of God," to be "born of the Spirit," to be "begotten through the gospel," to be "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God," are passages of similar import. "The sword of the spirit is the word of God;" and our Saviour said to the Jews, "It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the *words* that I speak unto you, they are *spirit* and they are *life*."

Nothing can be more groundless than the supposition, that this view of the subject diminishes the grace of God in the salvation of sinners. Does it not give him the glory of opening the way of life by the blood of his Son; of instituting means wisely adapted to our benefit; of presenting the most weighty motives to induce us to attend upon them; and, after all, of accompanying the means by his spirit, and blessing them for our salvation? If the means be not adapted to their end, why were they instituted? And if ministers do not view them as thus adapted, why do they preach the gospel? This view of the subject will rationally account for the many instances to be found of the most pious, humble, and persevering

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christians, who can give no account of the time or manner of their conversion, and who have to determine the fact, that they have been born of God, as *all ought* to do, by finding in themselves the genuine "fruits of the spirit—love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith;" or that "wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy." In respect to such christians, it is to be supposed, that God, by his "still small voice," or the imperceptible operation of his spirit, sanctified to them the means of his own appointment, made them wise unto salvation, and heirs of immortal bliss. The greater part who give evidence of having been thus converted, were probably persons who had been early devoted to God by pious parents, and whose education had been calculated to impress on their minds a serious regard for the word and institutions of Christ. And should these views be duly cultivated by ministers of the gospel, and should parents become suitably engaged to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, we might rationally hope to see such effects, as would fill earth and heaven with joy and praise.

REMARKABLE CONVERSION OF A JEW.

"A POOR student, who studied divinity at the university of Leipsic, having occasion to undertake a journey to his distant friends, was in want of the necessary money for that purpose. He therefore was induced to go to a learned Jew, to pawn his Hebrew Bible, and Greek Testament. The latter contained the Greek and German text, in opposite columns. The learned Jew, little as he valued this book, was however prevailed upon to take it, and to give the student half a rix-dollar for it. During the absence of the student, he undertook to read it through, with a view to confirm his mind in enmity against Jesus; to ridicule his person in the synagogue, and to be better prepared to testify his zeal for the Jewish faith. His wife and children were not permitted to see the book; he was determined to read it alone, as a sworn enemy of Jesus, and to discover the falsehood of the christian religion in all its parts. As the student was absent about seven weeks, the Jew had sufficient leisure to perform his task. But as he proceeded to read, his surprise increased, and a sacred awe prevaded him. In reading some impressive passages, he could scarcely refrain from exclaiming, ah, that Jesus were my Saviour! Having completed the reading, he was astonished at himself, and exceedingly perplexed, that in spite of his earnest desire to find fuel in the New Testament for the increase of his burning enmity against Jesus, he had discovered nothing

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of hatred, but on the contrary much that is great, sublime, heavenly, and divine. At length he charged himself with silly simplicity and blind folly, and resolved to open the book no more. In this resolution he persisted some days. But the consolatory and heavenly instructions which he had read, and which left an indelible impression on his mind, and the glorious prospect of life eternal, which had opened before him, did not suffer him to rest either day or night. Now he resolved to read the New Testament a second time, fully determined to be more careful in ascertaining that Jesus and his apostles had justly deserved the hatred of all the Jews in all ages. But again he was unable to discover any thing that is absurd, or bears the stamp of falsehood; but much wisdom, inexpressible comforts for an afflicted mind, and a hope of immortality which seemed to rescue him from that dreadful anxiety, with which the thoughts of futurity had often filled him. Still he could not divest himself of his prejudices, but read the New Testament a third time with the following resolution: If I discover nothing the third time, why Jesus and his apostles and their doctrine should be hated by Jews, I will become a christian; but if my wish in first opening the book is now gratified, I will forever detest the christian religion. During the third reading of the history of Jesus, his doctrines and promises, he often could not refrain from tears; his soul was affected in a manner which no pen can describe. Now he was quite overcome, the love of the most holy and most lovely of the children of men filled his soul. Being fully determined to become a christian, he went without delay and made his desire known to a christian minister. Now the student returned from his journey and brought the borrowed money with interest, to redeem his two books. The Jew asked him if he would sell the New Testament. The student was unwilling to part with it, but after some persuasion yielded. What do you demand for it? asked the Jew. A rix dollar will satisfy me, was the reply. The Jew opened a chest, and laid down one hundred Louis d'ors. Take that, said he; gladly will I pay more if you desire it: and if at any time I can be of use to you, only apply to me and I will be your friend to the utmost of my power. The student was surprised, and supposed that the Jew made sport of him. But the latter related to him, what change of mind had been wrought in him by reading the New Testament, upbraided him with setting so little value on that precious book, and said 'never will I part with this book, and you will oblige me by accepting the money.' From that time he became a sincere christian."

The Appendix of the Christian Observer for 1812, from which this pleasing account was taken, is filled with various intelligence, which must gladden the hearts of christian readers. In this you behold the united brethren, extending their benevolent missionary exertions in Greenland, the W. India islands,

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Surinam, and the Cape of Good Hope. You may also see auxiliary Bible Societies springing up in the various parts of the British dominions, and many other societies for relieving the wants of the poor, and extending the blessings of religion. While God is pouring out the vials of his wrath on all the nations of christendom, it must afford ground of hope and comfort, to see so many of his professed people awaking from their slumbers, and uniting their efforts for such benevolent purposes. Happy will be the day, when all the animosities among professed christians shall be sunk into oblivion, by united efforts to promote the cause of the redeemer, the happines and salvation of mankind.

Illustrations of passages in the New Testament, which refer to climate, places, offices, sentiments, manners, and customs among the Jews, in the time of our Saviour.

Continued from page 115.

16

Luke iii. 2. "*Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests.*"

IT is well known, that there were not, properly, two high priests among the Jews at the same time. Caiaphas was at this time the high priest; and Annas had been, but was not now. Did Luke then mean to say, that Annas and Caiaphas were actually high priests at the same time? By no means.

In the first verse, says Selden, Luke gives an account of the external government of the Jews, by Tetrachs, and Procurators, or Governors; and in the second, an account of that civil and sacred government, which the Romans permitted the Jews to exercise by the Sanhedrim, and the high priest; and because Annas was then the *prince* of the Sanhedrim, and Caiaphas the *father* of the Sanhedrim, they are named together, because they possessed the chief authority, civil and sacred. They decided all controversies which were determinable by their law; though without the power of life and death, to enforce their sentences.

That there was a power of this sort possessed by the Jews at this time, is indicated by Josephus. "They assembled in the temple," he says, "and appointed several generals; and Joseph, the son of Gorion, and the high priest Ananus, were chosen to be *supreme governors of all things in the city.*" Ananus, here called the high priest, was not, at this time, in the office of the priesthood. But suppose Annas and Caiaphas to have been "supreme governors in the city," and the difficulty in the text is solved.

There was, says Josephus also, a disturbance between the Jews and the Samaritans, in the reign of Claudius. Cumanus, the Procurator, was not able to compose it, and appeals were made to Quadratus, the president of

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Syria. He, having punished several, "sent two others of the most powerful men of the Jews, as also *the high priests Jonathan and Ananias*, and Ananus the son of Ananias, and some other considerable men, to Cæsar." This is very nearly parallel with the words of the Evangelist. Jonathan had been high priest, but had been put out of the office long before this time by Vitellius. Ananias was now high priest. In like manner, in the text, Annas had formerly been high priest, but Caiaphas was now in that office. It may also be remarked, that Jonathan, who had been high priest, is named before Ananias; and the two names stand in the same order in the text.

There is however another solution which demands our notice. An officer was annually appointed, called the *sagan*, who was next to the high priest in dignity, and was his vicegerent. If the high priest was disqualified to officiate, by any legal uncleanness, the sagan acted for him on the day of expiation. It is said in the Babylonish Talmud, that "when Simeon Ben Kamith, the high priest, walked with the king on the evening of the day of expiation, his garments received some of the spittle of another. His brother Judah therefore entered, and officiated for him; and thus their mother, on the same day, saw two of her sons high priests."

Note. The Jewish day began at six in the evening; and consequently, the evening of the day of expiation was the evening preceding the day on which the expiatory sacrifices were offered. Thus says the book of Genesis, "*the evening* and *the morning* were the first day."

Others suppose the sagan not to have been the vicegerent of the high priest, but his bishop, whose peculiar duty it was to assist him in the affairs of the temple, and the service of the priests; but whose office referred as much to the common priests, as to the high priest. Maimonides says, that "all the priests were at the command of the sagan," and in the Talmud we find the sagan saying to them, "go and see if it be time to slay the victim;" "come and draw lots, who shall slay the victim, who shall sprinkle the blood," &c. Caiaphas was high priest, and it is supposed that Annas was the sagan; who, on account of his dignity, was called, equally with Caiaphas, the high priest; and was named first, because he was the father in law of Caiaphas.

See Whitby and Hammond on the text. Lardner v. i. p. 388–6. Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. in verse, and Jenning's Jewish Antiq. v. i. p. 260–5.

Note. As we may often have occasion to name the Mishna, and the Talmuds or Gemaras, it may be proper in this place to explain the nature of these Jewish authorities.

The Mishna is the true text of the pharisaical traditions, so often mentioned in the New Testament. Maimonides, (who was one of the most learned of the Jews, and born in 1131,) says, that all the laws which were given by God to Moses, were given *with an interpretation*. The text was written, but the inter-

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pretation was committed to memory. Rabbi Juda the holy, fearing that this law would be lost, committed it to writing, adding to the traditions which were believed actually to have been received from Moses, consequences drawn by reasoning from the premises, in which there was no disagreement, and conclusions upon disputations which were determined by the majority. The Mishna was made about A. D. 190.

The Mishna being preferred by the Jews, to the written law which was received from Moses, they bestowed upon it far the greatest part of their attention; and for several generations together, they incessantly disputed about its sense, and made interpretations, every man according to the measure of his understanding. The traditions and opinions of these disputants having grown to a vast bulk, and being liable to be lost, Rabbi Johanan, for the Jews of Palestine, made collections of the decisions and explanations of the Mishna. This is the *Jerusalem Gemara*, or *Talmud*, which proceeds only through a part of the Mishna, and is contained in one volume folio. The *Babylonian Gemara*, or *Talmud*, which is a similar collection, was made by Rabbi Ashe, or Asa, and consists of twelve folios.

As the Talmuds then are the body of the religion and morality of the Jews, whose authority they prefer to that of their own scriptures; as they believe these traditions and explanations are from God himself; that Moses revealed them to Aaron, and to the elders of Israel, who communicated them to the prophets, from whom they passed to the members of the great synagogue, and from thence to the Rabbies, who reduced them to the form of the Mishna and Gemaras—they of course enable us to understand with the greatest precision, what were the received sentiments or customs to which our Saviour referred, in reasoning with the Jews, or in inculcating upon them the doctrines and precepts of the gospel.

See Watton's Diss. or the traditions of the Scribes and Pharisees in the time of Christ. v. i. p. 10—24, and Calmet on the word Talmud.

17

Matthew 3. i. "Preaching in *the wilderness of Judea.*"

This is one of the texts by which the New Testament has been supposed to encourage the retirement and abstinence of hermits. But what was the *wilderness* in which John preached, and what were the *deserts* in which he resided, (Luke i. 80.) "till the day of his shewing unto Israel?"

"The seah of Jerusalem," says the Babylonian Talmud, "exceeds the seah of the wilderness," that is of the country, "a sixth part." (Note. The seah is a measure of a little more than two and an half wine gallons.)

Paul says, that he was "in perils in the city, and in perils in the wilderness." The expression of the evangelist means no more than, that John preached in the country, before he preached in the city. See Lightfoot on the verse.

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Matt. iii. 2. "*The kingdom of heaven* is at hand."

The phrases, "kingdom of God," and "kingdom of heaven," implied precisely the same to a Jewish ear. They were taken from Dan. vii. 13, 14. and occur frequently in Jewish writings. That the Jews applied them to the kingdom of the expected Messiah, is plain from the inquiry of the Pharisees to our Lord, "when the kingdom of God would come?" (Luke xvii. 20.) "They thought," says the same evangelist, "that the kingdom of God would immediately appear." (ch. xix. 4.) The Chaldee paraphrast renders Isaiah xl. 9. "say to the cities of Judah, the kingdom of your God is come, or revealed;" and Isaiah liii. 11. "They shall see the kingdom of his Messiah." The prophets, in speaking of the Messiah, so often call him a king, and deliverer, that the Jews, accustomed to this phraseology, expected a temporal king, exercising power over his enemies, restoring their monarchy, making conquests, raising the throne of David to it former splendor, and rewarding his friends and servants in proportion to their fidelity. In conformity to this phraseology, our Lord said, that *the kingdom of God had come.* He asserted that he was the Messiah, when he said to the Jews, "if I, with the finger of God, cast out devils, no doubt *the kingdom of God is come upon you.*" It is not surprising therefore, that such multitudes flocked to the preaching of John. We have before shown the prevalence of the expectation, that the Messiah was to appear at this time; (see Illustration 6,) and when John said, that "the kingdom of heaven was at hand," they as well understood him, as if he had said, *the days are accomplished, and the promised deliverer of Israel is near.* The inquiries of "the people," "the publicans," and "the soldiers," (Luke iii. 10, 12, and 14.) plainly shew how eager had been this anticipation, and how readily they would have received such a Messiah as they had expected.

"Israel," says the Babylonish Talmud, "will have no need of *the teaching* of the Messiah; for, says Isaiah, (xi. 10.) THE GENTILES *shall seek him*, but not Israel. Wherefore then is the Messiah to come, and what will he do? *He will restore the captivity of Israel.*"

See Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. in vers. and Luke iii. 5.

Any one who would understand these phrases, as they are applied in the gospels, may consult Campbell's dissertations, 1st volume of his works, pp. 179—185 and 370—380. Newcome Cappe has also made a labored examination of them. Critical Remarks, vol. 1. pp. 131—211.

19

Matt. iii. 4. "The same John had *his raiment of camels hair*, and a leathern girdle about his loins, and *his meat was locusts and wild honey.*"

Camels are not only used in the east, for carrying burdens through the deserts, but their milk and flesh are eaten, and garments are made of their hair. Chardin says, that the modern

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dervises wear such garments, as they do also great leather girdles; and sometimes feed on locusts. The Cashmirian wool, of which shauls of grest fineness and value are manufactured, was not probably at this time known in Judea; and the hair of Jewish camels will not admit of being so manufactured. A garment of hair, it will be recollected, was worn by the Nazarites during their separation; and it was constantly worn by John, because he was a perpetual Nazarite. (See Illust 1.)

But to those who know not how much locusts have been, and are at this day, in the east, an article of food, it will appear to be a very peculiar circumstance, that John should have eaten them. But by the Arabs, they are even cousidered as a delicacy; and sprinkled with salt, and fried, it is said that they are not unlike, in taste, to fresh water cray-fish. Niebuhr, in the first volume of his travels, gives an account of the locusts, sometimes coming from the eastward to the south-west, in Arabia. "Never," says he, "have I seen them in such numbers, as in the dry plain between mount Samara of Jerim; for there are places where they might be swept up by the hands. *We saw an Arab who had gathered a sack full, in order to dry them, and keep them for his winter provisions.* When the rain ceases but for a few hours on the west side of the mountain, there come such numerous legions from the side of the east, that the peasants of Mensil were obliged to drive them away from their fields, that they might not entirely destroy their fruits."

The evangelist was probably induced to mention John's eating "locusts and wild honey," from the circumstance of having mentioned his residence in the desert; and both perhaps imply no more, than that he lived in the country, and in the simplicity and plainness of a country life. The Jerusalem Talmud says, that "*he who obligated himself by a vow to abstain from flesh, could not eat either fishes or locusts;*" which shews that locusts were, at that time, a common article of food.

See Harmer's Observations, vol. 1. p. 487. and vol. 4. pp. 158, and 485—7. And Lightfoot on the verse.

(To be continued.)

ANECDOTES.

OF BOERHAAVE.

A FRIEND of this celebrated man, who had often admired his patience under the greatest provocations, asked him by what means he had so entirely suppressed that impetuous passion, *anger*. The Doctor answered with the utmost frankness and sincerity, that naturally he was quick of resentment, but by *daily prayer* he attained that mastery over himself.

It was his custom which he never violated, to spend the first hour of every day in prayer, though patients from every country in Europe applied to him for advice.

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LADY STORMONT.

LADY STORMONT, mother of Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, on being complimented by another lady, that she had the three finest sons in Scotland to be proud of, answered, "No, madam, I have much to be thankful for, but nothing to be proud of."

SAVING FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.

ON this subject much has been written, and many different opinions have been propagated. Instead of animadverting on the opinions of others, we shall endeavour to exhibit a scriptural view of the faith in question.

That kind of faith or belief, which is common to good and bad men, or which men may possess and yet be miserable, cannot be *saving faith*. But under the light of the gospel, it is common for good and bad men to assent to the same doctrinal propositions as true. People are indeed divided into sects in regard to doctrines; yet in each sect you will find good and bad men contending for the same articles of faith. At the day of judgment, those on the left hand of the Judge may believe every doctrinal proposition, which will be believed by those on the right; yea with an irresistible conviction and full belief of the truth of these doctrines the wicked may "go away into everlasting punishment;" and the reflection, that they did believe many of these doctrines, while in a state of probation, may add to their sufferings in the regions of woe. What then is the difference between this common belief and that faith which is saving? To this we answer; saving faith induces him, who possesses it, to humble and persevering obedience to Christ, as his Lord and Master.

It may be useful to observe the forms of speech, adopted by our Saviour and other inspired teachers. "This is the work of God, that ye believe *on* him whom he hath sent;"—"that whosoever believeth *in* him should not perish, but have everlasting life;"—"he that believeth *on* the Son of God hath everlasting life," &c.

Now, to *believe in* a person, is to *confide in* him; to *believe on* a person, is to *rely on* him for the purpose proposed. To believe *on* one, whom God hath sent, implies putting confidence in him, as one divinely commissioned and submitting ourselves to his guidance in respect to the object of his mission. As much as christians are divided, in these things they will agree, "that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners;" to "bring life and immortality to light through the gospel;" that "the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world; that this Son is the "captain of our salvation," and Conductor to eternal life. In the object of his mission, it is presupposed, that we were in a sinful state, exposed to perish, and that we needed a Saviour and a Guide.

But to believe *in him*, or *on him* as our Saviour and Conductor to life and glory, is a very different

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thing from giving our assent to the truth of any particular doctrine or opinion respecting his person or dignity; or even any proposition relating to the object of his mission. A person may assent to the truth of any doctrinal proposition relating to him, and yet feel no disposition to "learn of him who was meek and lowly of heart," or to confide in him and submit to his instructions. Hence we are told, "with the *heart* man believeth unto righteousness;" hence also true faith is represented, as a "faith which *worketh by love;*" and on the same ground we read of the "obedience of faith."

Suppose that the people of a particular state, under the government of a good king, have revolted from their allegiance, and become exposed to the punishment of death. In mercy the king sends his son as an ambassador, with a message of grace and peace. When the son arrives, he publishes his credentials, and proclaims pardon to all who will receive him as his father's ambassador, and submit to his guidance. He assures them, that if they honor him, it will be regarded as honoring the king that sent him; on the contrary, if they despise him, it will be considered as despising his father, and they will be treated accordingly.

In a case like this, such might be the circumstances, that different opinions would be entertained as to the person of the ambassador, even among those who were disposed to regard him in his *official* character, and to comply with his requirements and the object of his mission. Others might believe the truth respecting his person, and the fact of his being sent by the king, and yet refuse to obey. They might have no affection for the father or the son, no penitence for their offences, no gratitude for the offered mercy; and choose to hazard the consequences of the king's displeasure, rather than submit to his terms of pardon; they might flatter themselves, that they were safe in their present condition, or that the offer of mercy would be repeated in some future day; yea, their belief that the king had so far displayed his kindness, as to send his son, might encourage them to abuse his goodness, in hope of final impunity.

It is, therefore, easy to see, that persons might possess very correct opinions with regard to the king and his son, and even with regard to the offers of mercy, and be as much exposed to punishment, as if no message of grace had been sent. Is it not also evident, that a *compliance* with the message would be much better evidence of a dutiful temper, than the most correct opinions, and of much more importance to the safety of the subjects? Would the most correct opinions respecting the character of the king, or the ambassador, be of any avail, if the subjects should continue in a state of disobedience?

If we examine some approved examples of faith, mentioned in the scriptures, we may find confirmation of the ideas which have been communicated. "By faith Noah, being warned of God, *prepared an ark*, to the saving of his house." "By faith Abraham,

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when he was called—*obeyed*," "By faith, when he was tried," by the divine command, "*he offered Isaac his son upon the altar.*" James, speaking of the same faith and the same fact, interrogates, "was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" By his obedience his faith was proved to be genuine. By the same obedient faith, "Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter: choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." By faith the apostles of Jesus obeyed his commands at the hazard of worldly enjoyments, and even at the peril of their lives.

Such is the nature of that faith which, on the plan of divine grace, is imputed or accounted for righteousness; and such is the nature of saving faith in the Lord Jesus. It implies a disposition to obey him, to take up the cross and follow him. It does not incline a person to rest in either cold or warm speculations on the doctrines of christianity; nor in a belief that his own opinions are more correct than his neighbour's, nor with saying Lord, Lord, without *doing* the things which the Lord requires. But by saving faith, persons are led to "deny ungodliness and every worldly lust, to live soberly, righteously, and godly;" to add to faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity, or good will to all mankind.

If our belief in revealed doctrines were as correct as Gabriel's, unless it influence our hearts to obey the will of our Lord, it would be of no more avail to us, than it is to satan to believe there is one God, or that Jesus Christ is "the holy one of God." How commonly do we see persons of the same sect, the same opinions, as to the doctrines of the gospel, who are of opposite characters! Of two, who thus accord in opinion, one will show that he believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, by walking as he walked, while the belief of the other is as fruitless, as the fig tree that was accursed and withered. And are not the same striking distinctions to be observed in every sect? If so, saving faith must be something very different from correct opinions.

It will not be denied, that some opinions of the personal character and dignity of our Saviour have a greater tendency, than others, to impress the mind with exalted ideas of the love and grace of God in our salvation. Nor are we at all indifferent in respect to which of the many opinions are entertained of his character. But while we sincerely think our own views of Christ are the most conformable to truth, and tend to the most exalted and impressive conceptions of the love and grace of God in the redemption of men; we ought in candor to admit, that others think the same of their respective theories. Nor can we deny that *obedient faith* is of a *saving nature*, whatever defect there may be in speculative opinions.

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If those who contend for correctness of opinion, and conformity to their own views, as essential to salvation, would suitably reflect on the evidences we have of unfeigned piety, in persons who are as ignorant almost as the savages, of the questions in debate among the clergy; they would easily discover, that correct opinions of the person of our Saviour, however important in some respects, are not the "one thing needful." They would also see, that a knowing head and an obedient heart are different things, and not always united in the same person. How much more to be admired is the religion of a poor, ignorant woman, whose faith in the Lord Jesus disposes her to learn of him, to be meek, kind and tender towards every body, and to do all the good in her power, than that of a learned man, so inflated with an opinion of his own infallibility and goodness, that he can make his own creed a standard for every other person, and deal out the most merciless censures and reproaches against professors of other denominations! If you wish for another example of saving faith, behold the humility, meekness, and importunity of the syrophenician woman, rather than the arrogant conduct of him who habitually says to his Maker, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men," and to his fellow christian, "stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou."

IMPERFECTIONS CONSISTENT WITH SINCERITY.

Sincerity is a word, which is often used in an indeterminate and unsatisfactory manner; so that we often hear men called sincere, who have no other quality in the world to recommend them. A man may be sincerely impious, or sincerely intolerant. He may be following his judgment, and even his conscience, when he is offending against the laws of God and man. In the common sense of the word, as it is opposed merely to dissimulation, the quality is negative, indifferent, and not much to be desired. When it is applied to religion, it is used in a good sense, and usually includes the idea of unqualified and hearty devotion to the will of God. Still however, when used with reference to religion, it is *sometimes* made a convenient substitute for some more specific description of men's characters and motives; and we are glad to avoid a close scrutiny of the justice of the opinions or conduct of ourselves or others, by saying, when we can say nothing else, that they are sincere.

Thus it happens, that when the subject of religious opinions is discussed, and some one is found who deviates from the common standard, and question is made of his correctness, the conclusion often heard is, he may be erroneous, but he gives proof of his sincerity. When the principle on which a man acts is canvassed, and doubts are raised of the religious or moral charac-

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ter of another, and some are proposing one test of character and some another, the inquiry is usually terminated by saying, though he may be imperfect, or mistaken, yet we have reason to think him sincere.

A word of such common and convenient application deserves to be thoroughly understood and cautiously used. Especially in our examination of ourselves, as well as of others, it is of importance, that we know what it is we pretend to, when we lay claim to sincerity. My present purpose is to consider with what imperfections sincerity is consistent; and at another opportunity I shall endeavour to point out some of the most sure and indispensable tests of this quality.

In the first place then, sincerity is not inconsistent with some degree of prejudice. Such is the constitution of human nature, and the circumstances of our education, that the best of men find it impossible to grow up without receiving many prejudices against individuals or descriptions of men, as well as against opinions, which greater age and further information are necessary to correct. Thus we find in the evangelist, that the excellent Nathanael, when he is first informed of the origin of Jesus, to whom he is introduced, cries out in the spirit of some of that age, "can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" This appears to us a most absurd and unworthy prepossession; yet it did not prevent our Saviour's immediately giving this very Nathanael that memorable character, "behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile." This instance in the evangelical narration should teach us candor in our judgments of men, and encourage us to make every allowance for inevitable prejudice, when it is not obstinately, unjustly cherished. The true difference between a sincere and insincere opinionist is this; that the former, though he is not free from unfortunate biases, is yet *willing* to be free from them. He neither flies from conviction, nor does he close his eyes against evidence. He is a friend perhaps of particular men, or attached to particular opinions, but he is neither afraid of the progress of truth, nor does he place impediments in the way of examination. The insincere bigot, on the contrary, stifles his convictions, and perverts testimony. He is angry when he is found in the wrong, and dissembles when he is really convinced of his error. His prejudices are personal; and his views are selfish and miliguant. Not so the guileless Nathanael; for he came at the invitation of Jesus, and saw, and was converted.

Again, religious sincerity is not inconsistent with considerable ignorance. The whole history of pious men bears witness to this, and illustrates the comprehensive nature of true religion. We find in the gospels, that the apostles, who were most sincerely attached to their master during his life, were yet, in a great degree, ignorant of his real character, till after his resurrection. They could not be persuaded, that he was to suffer; and even after he had suffered and risen again, their minds were full of

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his royal character, and they were expecting to see him "restore the kingdom to Israel." Before the vision granted to Peter, the disciples had no suspicion, that the favor of God was to be extended to the Gentiles. Now whoever will consider the importance of these facts and doctrines, such as the sufferings of Christ, his real character as Messiah, and the comprehension and extension of his church, must acknowledge, that they were subjects of what we should call fundamental importance in the christian dispensation. If then the early disciples could remain under such gross misapprehensions on these subjects, and yet be regarded as the sincere friends and followers of Christ; it surely is too presumptuous in us to say of one another, that a denial of this or that tenet, which to us appears plainly revealed, is yet inconsistent with another man's religious sincerity, or a state of acceptance with God. It may be, that unity of sentiment, as far as some would wish to carry it, has become necessary to unity of affection; but we ought to inquire, whether we are not wrong in harboring that temper of mind, which makes this unity of opinion so necessary to christian affection. You perhaps have attained to certain fundamental principles of christian belief, which appear to you so clear, that you are astonished how any one, who reads the scriptures, can for a moment doubt them. You are conscious of your own sincerity, and therefore it is natural enough to conclude, that he, who does not think like yourself, cannot be as sincere. But let us remember, that when we once begin to make that a test of others' sincerity, which we know would have been of our own, we go beyond our christian liberty; for no one but God has a right to say what is fundamental to any individual, or what errors may coexist with humility and honesty of mind.

Thirdly. Religious sincerity is not inconsistent with occasional lapses, or considerable infirmities. There is no man upon earth, who doth good and sinneth not; and if God should be strict to mark iniquity, even in the most sincere, who could stand before him? Thus it may happen, that the most devout christian may find his affections sometimes languid, and his thoughts wandering; but if this were the habitual state of his mind in prayer, he would have reason to be alarmed, and we should doubt his sincerity. The meek may sometimes be betrayed into passion, and the temperate into excessive indulgence; but the proof of his insincerity in such cases would be, not that he fell into the sin, but that he fell into it without remorse, or exposed himself again without precaution. There are some faults, to which the most ardent and open dispositions are peculiarly exposed, and there are other sins of the habitual temper, which never appear in the ordinary and public department; if then you would know what faults of your character may excite a doubt of the sincerity of your religious professions, be assured, that your sudden infirmities of temper are not half so sure a test of your religion, as what may be called your ruling passion and tenor of life.

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POETRY.

GOD THE GIVER OF EVERY BLESSING.

Author of life, of joy, of health,
Thy goodness I adore.
O give me strength to speak thy praise,
And grace to love thee more!

First for this world, so fair, so good,
My daily thanks shall rise!
For every fruit and every flower,
Thy bounteous hand supplies.

For the green field, the waving corn,
The lofty, spreading tree;
For that bright sun which shines on all,
And borrows light from *thee*.

For the pale moon's reflected beams,
For every genial shower;
For all which elevates the mind,
To contemplate thy power.

But yet a nobler cause demands
The tribute of my love.
Can words describe the wonderous gift,
Descending from above?

Jesus, the Saviour, dwelt on earth;
He died, that we might live;
Endured the sorrows of the cross,
Immortal hope to give.

Ah who can tell the bitter scorn,
The dear Redeemer bore?
Or who describe the mental grief,
Which his blest bosom tore?

Low in the grave the Saviour lay,
While darkness veiled the skies;
But lo!—he bursts the bands of death,
To glory see him rise.

No more shall tears our cheeks bedew;
The triumph is complete.
Children of God, who *part* on earth,
In heaven above will *meet*.

Father of love! this work is thine.
For us thou gav'st thy son.
O let us then devoted be,
And live to thee alone!

HYMN,

COMPOSED FOR THE HUMANE SOCIETY, JUNE, 1813.

The grave of Lazarus how blest,
When at the tears his sisters shed,
The sympathizing Jesus wept,
And mercy's voice awoke the dead!*

That voice recalled the widow's son,
When pale upon his funeral bier,
From death to life:—the Saviour felt
Compassion at a mother's tear.†

Nor did the rabbi plead in vain
O'er his wan daughter's closing eyes;
The great Physician touched the child,
And death gave back the lovely prize.‡

Philanthropy, with angel smile,
Then cheered the poor, and chased despair:
The dungeon beamed with sudden light,
With health and joy—for Christ was there.

In humble imitation led,
By his great law of love refined,
May we the blest example feel,
And aid the cause of human kind.

* John xi. † Luke vii. ‡ Luke viii.

A letter from a Moravian missionary at St. Thomas, May, 1811.

"I have again arrived in St. Thomas. The negroes received us with the most lively expressions of joy. I must add something concerning the distribution of the Spanish Testaments, which I was favored to carry out with me, with a view to give them to those Spaniards, who came hither from Porto

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Rico. As the worthy British and Foreign Bible Society has been pleased to place their trust in me, I am thankful that I may hope to have fulfilled their kind intentions already. I had a rich enjoyment in performing this act of benevolence, while I presented to the dark looking Spaniards this valuable gift of the society. Their gloomy countenances, which in general seemed to indicate a disposition rather for all the wrathful passions, than for friendship and confidence, brightened up with an expression of gratitude, of which their tears gave farther evidence; and they declared their regard and love for their benefactors in the warmest terms. Their thanks do not belong to me, they are altogether due to that benevolent society, to whom I beg you to transfer them. I am fully rewarded by what I have enjoyed as a blessing for my own soul on this occasion. I endeavoured to give them a proper account of the Bible Society, and aim of their labors; which was to put, if possible, into the hands of every man, to whom they could procure access, the Holy Word of God, that he might read and study it for himself. Many wished to possess the whole Bible in their own language. If the worthy society should feel disposed to send more to this island for the same purpose, I should esteem it the highest favor to be their distributor."

Christ. Obs.

From a report of the Moravian missionaries at Antigua.

St. Johns, Dec. 30, 1811.

"In answer to inquiries made by the legislature, we have given in the number of baptized negroes belonging to our congregations in this island; at St. Johns 3640; at Gracehill 1326; at Gracebay 790 adults; baptized children in the three settlements 1916; catechumens 1316, besides the new people." *Christ. Obs.*

From a Moravian missionary at Surinam, Dec. 27, 1811.

"After all the changes that have occurred in this year by decease, exclusion, addition, and readmission, the negro congregation at Paromaribo consists of 456 persons, exclusive of 39 candidates for baptism, and new people. The number of communicants is 362." *Christ. Obs.*

PROPRIETORS' NOTICE.

When the arrangements were made for this work, it was supposed, that a large majority of the subscribers would, on account of the price, prefer the numbers printed on common paper. It was therefore determined, that of 2000 copies, 1200 should be printed on common paper and 800 on fine. But the proprietors have found themselves disappointed, and unable to satisfy the demands for fine paper. This is to them a matter of serious regret. With a view to remedy the evil as soon as they can, without too much hazard, they have it in contemplation to close the first volume with the eighth number, and commence the second volume with the commencement of the next year. At which time it is hoped an arrangement may be made to meet the wishes of all the subscribers. If the first volume should close in December, those, who shall have paid for twelve numbers, will be considered as having paid in advance for four numbers of the second volume. As there may be many, who will subscribe for the second volume, who have not subscribed for the first, it is intended that each volume shall be complete by itself, without any continuation of pieces from the number for December to that of January. It is requested that all, who have the care of subscription papers, would give all needful information to the publishers, Cummings and Hilliard, as early as the first of December next, that the proprietors may know what arrangements to make for the second volume.

Candidate for the ministry, recently approbated.

Mr Francis Jackson, Cambridge.

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THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

No. 6. *OCTOBER*, 1818. VOL. I.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF THE REV. JOHN HOWE.

Concluded from p. 134.

As Mr. Howe was a trinitarian, and published his views on the subject, it would perhaps be deemed unpardonable, if this should be passed over in silence. As we are to call no man Master, knowing that one is our Master, who is now in heaven; so we wish not to reproach either the dead or the living for their honest opinions, knowing that we also are liable to err. But notwithstanding all the piety, learning, and discernment of Mr. Howe, he entertained such views of the trinity, as exposed him to the charge of *heresy*, in the opinion of some, who assumed the name of *the orthodox* in his own time; and such as perhaps no judicious trinitarian, in this country, will admit.

Not long before Mr. Howe published his sentiments on this subject, Dr. Wallace, Dr. Sherlock, Dr. South, Dr. Cudworth, and some others, had published different and even contradictory explanations of the doctrine. By an anonymous writer these publications had been answered, and their hostility to each other had been illustrated. From these circumstances Mr. Howe was led to publish his views, under the title of "A calm inquiry respecting the possibility of a trinity in the godhead;" in which he gave an explanation of the doctrine, different from any one of those, who preceded him. The contents of the work corresponded with the title; it was a "*calm* inquiry." This was not all; it was an *able* inquiry. As Mr. Howe saw fit to dissent from the other writers, it may be useful to state briefly their respective opinions, so far as we have been able to obtain them.

According to Dr. Wallace the *three persons* are only three *respects* or *relations* of God to his creatures, as *Creator*, *Redeemer*, and *Sanctifier*. This he illustrated by *three names* or *titles* of the same *man;* and by the *three dimensions* of a cube, *length*, *breadth*, and *depth*.

Dr. Sherlock maintained, that the three persons were "three distinct, infinite *beings*, *minds*, or *spirits*," as distinct as any three men; and that these three beings are united in one God by "mutual consciousness."

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The bishop of Sarum said, "By *person* here is not meant what we commonly understand by the word, *a complete intelligent being*, distinct from every other being, but only, that every one of the *blessed three* has a *peculiar distinction*."

Dr. South supposed the three persons to be "three *postures*," or something "*equivalent to postures*." He wrote "animadversions" on the explanation given by Dr. Sherlock. These were answered by a friend of Sherlock, in a work, entitled "The doctrine of the trinity placed in a due light." This writer however was so far from vindicating Dr. Sherlock, that he expressly affirmed, that the "three persons are no more than three *attributes* or *properties*. *Goodness* in God," said he, "is infinite, and therefore is God; the same must be said of *wisdom* and *power*, and yet they are not three Gods but one God."

The writer of "twenty eight propositions," supposed the Father only to be God, in the highest sense of the word;—that it is no contradiction to suppose, that he produced other beings so perfect, that they have all perfections excepting self-existence, independence, and that of being the *original* of all things; and that between the *three* there is an "inconceivably close union in *will and nature*."

These explanations, being perfectly contradictory to each other, excited considerable animosity among those, who were in favor of the general doctrine, and gave great advantage to those, who did not admit it as an article of faith. The anonymous writer, abovementioned, availed himself of this advantage, and exhibited the explanations as at war with each other. Some of them he considered as perfectly *unitarian*, and others as *tritheistical*. Such a state of things very naturally interested the feelings of Mr. Howe, and induced him to show his opinion, which was as follows:—

That the three persons are "three distinct numerical *natures*, beings, or substances." He also used the terms "distinct essences" and "distinct spirits." The union he conceived to have been eternal, and more than Dr. Sherlock's "mutual consciousness." He illustrated it by the union of the soul and body, and also by the union of "the *vegetative*, *sensitive*, and *intellective natures* in man." As these *three natures* are united in one man, so he supposed three spiritual natures united in one God. This union he believed to be consistent with such perfect distinction, that the three persons enjoy the most "delicious society." Yet he maintained, that neither the Father, the Son, nor the Holy Ghost, considered "sejunctly or by himself," could be called *God* in an adequate sense of the word, because each of the other two is included in that name.

In relation to these views Dr. Calamy states, that "Mr. Howe met with very different treatment from different persons, according to their different notions; by some he was the more respected, while others wished he had left this argument untouched, and kept his thoughts to himself; and some, out of the abundance of

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their zeal for *orthodoxy*, could scarce forbear charging him, as well as Dean Sherlock, with *downright heresy*." To this uncharitableness the Doctor replies in the words of Bishop Stillingfleet:—"There is," said he, "a kind of *bitter zeal*, which is so fierce and violent, that it rather inflames than heals any wounds that are made; and is of so malignant a nature, that it spreads and eats like a cancer, and if a stop were not given to it, it might endanger the whole body."

We feel happy in having no inclination to asperse the fair character of Mr. Howe, by any severe remarks on his very singular hypothesis. The better way for us will be, in view of his imperfections, to reflect on our own liability to be misled; and in view of his many moral excellencies, to go and do likewise. We shall only state two questions, and then dismiss his views of the trinity. If it be, as Mr. Howe supposed, that God is three Spirits, or beings, *so united*, as to be *one Being*, and so distinct, that the *three persons* enjoy the most delicious society, why is there no intimation of these facts, in any of the examples of prayer or praise recorded in the Bible? And why did God assume the name I AM, rather than WE ARE?

The life of this eminent saint embraces so many interesting particulars, and his occasional writings furnish so many useful remarks, that we hardly know what to omit or where to end. But it is time to draw to a close. In that part of his life, which was subsequent to the events that have been narrated, he had great occasion for grief, on account of the continued animosities among those, who professed to be the disciples of Jesus. To a man of his meek and pacific spirit, such things must have been distressing. "He seems to have been born into the world," says Dr. Calamy, "to support generous principles, a truly catholic spirit, and an extensive charity." For these purposes he was eminently qualified, both in ability and temper; and to these purposes he devoted a great part of his time and talents. He lived until April A. D. 1705. In his last sickness he enjoyed that peace and comfort, which the world could not give, and which was a foretaste of that reward, which grace has provided for those, who by patient continuing in well doing lay up treasures in heaven. With humble submission to the will of God, he manifested a desire to depart from this uncharitable world, that he might breathe in purer air, and enjoy the society of those, who are perfected in love.

A few years before the death of Mr. Howe, Dr. Watts wrote an elegy on Mr. Thomas Gouge. In closing the elegy he brought Mr. Howe to view, in the following manner:—

"Howe is a great but single name:
Amidst the crowd he stands alone;
Stands yet, but with his starry pinions on,
Drest for the flight and ready to be gone.
Eternal God, command his stay,
Stretch the dear months of his delay;
O we could wish his age were one immortal day!

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But when the flaming chariots come
And shining guards to attend the prophet home,
Amidst a thousand weeping eyes,
Send an Elisha down, a soul of equal size,
Or burn this worthless globe, and take us to the skies."

REFLECTIONS ON THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF MR. HOWE.

THE character of Mr. Howe has been brought to view in this work, as an example worthy to be imitated by every minister of the gospel, and as affording ground for some useful reflections.

One obvious reflection is this; that the characters of men should never be estimated by what is said or done against them by intolerant opponents. Were we to judge of the character of Mr. Howe by what was said and done against him by an overbearing clergy, we must conclude, that he was a very vile man. On the same ground, we should be compelled to draw a similar conclusion against his unoffending Lord and Master. The history of the church will afford satisfactory evidence, that little credit is due to what may be said against his opponents, by a person, who makes his own opinions a standard, by which he judges of the hearts of others. The prepossessions, which dispose him to assume dominion over their faith, prepare him to "call evil good and good evil," and to fancy, that it is a virtuous thing to destroy the character of those, who dare to dissent from his creed. Let any one seriously reflect on the character of our Lord, and the treatment he received; or even on the treatment received by Mr. Howe, and he will be sensible, that a good character is no security against reproach and oppression, so long as the spirit of intolerance prevails among christians.

Secondly. How happy would be the state of society in our land, if all the professed ministers of the gospel were of the temper of Mr. Howe! Great would be the resemblance to what is generally believed respecting the heavenly state. Could we but see in ministers in general "the meekness and gentleness of Christ," it would give a new aspect to christianity, and greatly contribute to peace and happiness. Is it not a melancholy fact, that by far the greatef part of the contention and bitterness, which appear between different sects of christians, is to be ascribed to the unhallowed zeal of ministers in support of their respective favorite opinions? So far as ministers of different sentiments treat each other in a humble and christian manner, are not their societies at peace in relation to each other? On the contrary, is it not almost uniformly the case, that an uncandid minister makes an uncandid people? A minister of this cast may indeed flatter himself, that he is doing God service; but what *error* could he propagate, which would be *more injurious* to his hearers, than the *unchristian feelings*, which his preaching and example are calculated to excite and encourage?

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To justify the intolerance of the present day, it will probably be pleaded, that the points, now in debate, are of far greater importance than those on account of which Mr. Howe was driven into exile. This will be granted; and for this very reason we have the greater need of candor in examining the subjects; and the more dangerous it must be to rely on the opinions of those, who have gone before us. But is not an intolerant spirit a never failing sign, that the person, who possesses it, has never candidly examined the reasonings of those, who dissent from him? Where is the man of any sect, noted for uncharitableness, who can lay his hand on his breast, and say, "I have patiently, candidly, thoroughly, and prayerfully examined the arguments of those opposed to my opinions?" Would it not be easier to find a number, who, like the Jewish High Priest, prior to any proper examination, in a petulant manner, exclaimed, "He hath spoken blasphemy! What further need have we of witness?" Can it be that men of this temper have ever duly considered the importance of the points in debate, or their own liability so to err, as to condemn the guiltless?

Moreover, is it not well known, that the most *frivolous* and most *absurd* opinions have often been magnified into essential doctrines? In the days of Calvin, to deny the doctrine of *transubstantiation* was accounted "damnable heresy." Why all this fiery zeal in support of a doctrine so manifestly repugnant to common sense? Were there no men of learning, or even of common sense, in the church of Rome? This will not be pretended. The fact was this, the Romish clergy were blinded by their prejudices and by traditions. It was so with the English clergy in the days of Mr. Howe. And do not these facts speak with an admonitory voice to the clergy of New England at the present day? Our liability to a similar course of inconsistency should lead every one to self-diffidence and self-inspection, lest he support error with an intolerant spirit, and condemn those more righteous than himself.

In addition to the inspired admonitions contained in the scriptures, we have the history of past ages to assure us, that if we are *men*, we are liable to err, and that the most self-confident and overbearing, are as fallible as others; yet how many can affirm their opinions on the most doubtful passages of scripture, and censure their opponents, with as much assurance as was ever displayed by a Roman pontiff! What do we see in the conduct of the ungodly, more astonishing, or more to be deplored, than this blindness in professed christians? Is it possible that men should suitably reflect on what they *read*, what they *hear*, and what they *experience*, and still be so self-confident and so censorious? Yet, as though nothing could be learned even by experience, or as though the disease were absolutely incurable, we see this blindness in some, who have frequently changed their own opinions. While on one side of a question, they could censure all on the other; but as soon as they

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changed their opinions, they changed the current of their censures; and thus, at one period or another, they have probably censured all the christian world, and doomed the whole to destruction.

Thirdly. How amiable does the character of Mr. Howe appear, considered as a minister, suffering reproach and oppression for his honest opinions. With all the firmness and intrepidity of an upright man, he united the tenderness of a christian towards his opponents. With what meekness and firmness did he conduct his part of the controversy! How careful not to inflame the passions of his friends against those who occasioned his afflictions! How careful to cultivate in their hearts the spirit of tenderness and forgiveness towards the very men who had driven a beloved minister into exile! We most sincerely hope, that the exhibition of this example, will have a favorable influence on the minds of all who are called to bear reproach for dissenting from popular doctrines. Whether they be correct in their opinions or not, it is infinitely important to them, that they cultivate a meek, inoffensive, and forgiving temper. By the exercise of such a spirit, they will be much more likely to obtain correct opinions, and what is still more important, they will insure the approbation of God. It will be impossible for God to condemn a man of such a temper, whatever may be the errors of his judgment. "The Lord looketh on the *heart*."

There are, it is believed, but very few ministers in this country, who will not, in *words*, approve the character of Mr. Howe, and disapprove the treatment he received. Let this be done by all classes in *deeds* as well as in *words*, and our churches will exclaim, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" If all would unite in this, there would be occasion for a universal jubilee throughout the land.

As a motive to induce every one to lay aside the spirit of intolerance, we may remark, that it does not, and will not, answer the purpose for which it is indulged. The object is, to prevent the prevalence of the sentiments against which it is exercised. But this *carnal weapon* cannot ultimately succeed in a land of freedom. It may *for* a time retard the progress *of* the obnoxious opinions, but it *will not* suppress them. On the contrary, this intolerance *may* accelerate their progress instead of retarding. In many cases this has been the obvious effect of such conduct. God has often frowned on this method of opposing imagined errors, or of supporting imagined truth, by so ordering events, that the inhuman means were made to operate contrary to the intention of those who adopted them. And well he might frown on such means, for they have as often been employed for the suppression of truth, as for the suppression of error. If such means were attended with uniform success, they would always be employed for the suppression of truth, when the majority are in the wrong. We rejoice in the thought, that

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God has not, by his word or his providence, given encouragement to such means; and we rejoice in the belief, that such means can never be ultimately successful in this country, until the constitutions, under which we enjoy our privileges, are completely overturned. Had we no regard to the honor of the christian religion, and were we desirous of the overthrow, the disgrace, or the injury, of any class of the clergy in New England, we should wish them to proceed in the project of erecting "Ecclesiastical Tribunals," for the trial of dissenting brethren. For it is our firm belief, that such a project, if pursued, would prove as fatal to their characters, as the gallows, erected by Haman for the ruin of Mordecai, did to his own life. But far be it from us to wish evil to any class of our brethren; we desire the happiness of all; we sincerely lament the disunion which exists, and all the means which are used to occasion or confirm alienations. We long to see the stumbling blocks removed out of the way, to see all who profess to be disciples of Jesus united, "rooted, and grounded in love," that others, seeing their good works, may glorify our Father who is in heaven.

It may not be amiss to add, that what *has* been repeatedly, *may* be again. It has been repeatedly the case, that the majority of the clergy were in the wrong, and that following generations have given a verdict in favor of the minority. How little did the Jewish clergy in the days of our Saviour, or the papal clergy in the time of the reformation, or the English clergy in the time of Mr. Howe, expect that posterity would give a verdict against them? A *Mosheim* of the next century may give a very different account of the characters and conduct of *some* of the clergy of the present day, from what they now anticipate.

OF σχισμα, [SCHISM] BY DR. CAMPBELL.

"THE Greek word frequently occurs in the New Testament, though it has only once been rendered *schism* by our translators. However, the frequency of its use among theologians has made it a kind of technical term in relation to ecclesiastical matters; and the way it has been bandied, as a term of ignominy, from sect to sect, reciprocally, makes it a matter of some consequence to ascertain, if possible, the genuine meaning it bears in holy writ. In order to this, let us have recourse to the oracles of truth, the source of light and direction.

"As to the proper acceptation of the word σχισμα, *schism*, when applied to objects merely material, there is no difference of sentiments amongst interpreters. Every one admits, that it ought to be rendered *rent*, *breach*, or *separation*. From this sense, it is transferred by metaphor to things incorporeal. Thus it is used once and again by the evangelist John, to signify a difference in opinion, expressed in

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words. Of the contest among the Jews concerning Jesus, some maintaining that he was, others that he was not the Messiah, the sacred historian says—*So there was a division*, or schism, *among the people because of him.* Here, it is plain, the word is used in a sense perfectly indifferent; for it was neither in the true opinion, supported by one side, nor in the false opinion, supported by the other, that the *schism* or division lay, but in the opposition of these two opinions. In this sense of the word, there would have been no *schism*, if they had been all of one opinion, whether it had been the true or the false. The word is used precisely in the same signification by this apostle in two other places of his gospel; John ix. 16, x. 19.

"But it is not barely to a declared difference in judgment, that even the metaphorical use of the word is confined. As *breach* or *rupture* is the literal import of it in our language; wherever these words may be figuratively applied, the term *schism* seems likewise capable of an application. It invariably presupposes, that among those things, whereof it is affirmed, there subsisted an union formerly, and as invariably denotes that the union subsists no longer. In this manner the Apostle Paul uses the word, applying it to a particular church, or christian congregation. Thus he adjures the Corinthians by the name of the Lord Jesus, that there be no divisions, or schisms, among them. And in another place of the same epistle he tells them, *I hear there are divisions*, or schisms, *among you.* In order to obtain a proper idea of what is meant by a breach or schism in this application, we must form a just notion of that, which constituted the union, whereof the schism was a violation. Now the great and powerful cement, which united the souls of christians, was their mutual love. *Their hearts*, in the emphatical language of holy writ, *were knit together in love.* This had been declared by their Master to be the distinguishing badge of their profession. *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.* Their partaking of the same baptism, their professing the same faith, their enjoying the same promises, and their joining in the same religious service, formed a connexion merely external, and of little significance, unless, agreeably to the apostle's expression, it was *rooted and grounded in love.* As this therefore is the great criterion of the christian character, and the foundation of the christian unity, whatever alienates the affections of christians from one another, is manifestly subversive of both, and may consequently, with the greatest truth and energy, be denominated schism. It is not so much what makes an outward distinction or separation, as what produces an alienation of heart, which constitutes schism in the sense of the apostle; for this strikes directly at the vitals of christianity. Indeed, both the evil and the danger of the former, that is, an external separation, is principally to be estimated from its influence upon the latter, in producing an alienation of the

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heart; for it is in the union of affection among christians, that the spirit, the life, and the power of religion are principally placed.

"It may be said, Does it not rather appear, from the passage first quoted, to denote such a breach of that visible unity in the outward order in their assemblies, as results from some jarring in their religious opinions, and by consequence in the expressions they adopted? This I own is what the words in immediate connexion, considered by themselves, would naturally suggest. *I beseech you, brethren, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions* [schisms] *among you, and that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.* It cannot be denied, that a certain unanimity, or a declared assent to the great articles of the christian profession, was necessary in every one, in order to his being admitted to and kept in the communion of the church. But then it must be allowed, that those articles were at that time few, simple, and perspicuous. It is one of the many unhappy consequences of the disputes that have arisen in the church, and of the manner in which these have been managed, that such terms of communion have since been multiplied in every part of the christian world, and not a little perplexed with metaphysical subtleties and scholastic quibbles. Whether this evil consequence was in its nature avoidable, or if it was, in what manner it might have been avoided, are questions foreign to the present purpose. Certain it is, however, that several phrases, used by the apostles in relation to this subject, commonly understood to mean unanimous in opinion, denote more properly, coinciding in affection, concurring in love, desire, hatred, and aversion.

"Further, let it be observed, that in matters whereby the essentials of the faith are not affected, much greater indulgence to diversity of opinion was given, in those pure and primitive times, than has been allowed since, when the externals, or the form of religion came to be raised on the ruins of the essentials, or the power; and a supposed correctness of judgment made of greater account than purity of heart. In the apostolic age, which may be styled the reign of charity, their mutual forbearance, in regard to such differences, was at once an evidence and an exercise of this divine principle. *Him that is weak in the faith,* says our apostle, *receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another that is weak eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth dispise him that eateth not, and let not him that eateth not, despise him that eateth. One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike.* As to these disputable points, *let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind,* and as far as he himself is concerned, act according to his persuasion. But he does not permit even him who is in the right to disturb his brother's peace by such unimportant inquiries. *Hast thou faith?* says he; the knowledge and conviction of the truth on the point in question? *Have it to thyself before God. Happy is*

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he, who condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And in another place, *Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.* We are to remember, that *as the kingdom of God is not meat and drink*, so neither is it logical acuteness in distinction, nor grammatical accuracy of expression; but it is *righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he, that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God and approved of men.*

A SURPRIZING CONFESSION OF ROUSSEAU,

A PHILOSOPHICAL UNBELIEVER.

"I CONFESS, that the majesty of the scriptures astonishes me; that the sanctity of the gospel speaks to my heart. View the books of the philosophers with all their pomp: what a littleness have they when compared with this! Is it possible, that a book, at once so sublime and simple, should be the work of men? Is it possible, that he, whose history it records, should be himself a mere man? Is this the style of an enthusiast, or of an ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his manners! what affecting grace in his instructions! what elevation in his maxims! what profound wisdom in his discourses! what presence of mind, what delicacy, and what justness in his replies! what empire over his passions! Where is the man, where is the philosopher, who knows how to act, to suffer, and to die, without weakness and without ostentation? When Plato paints his imaginary just man, covered with all the ignominy of guilt, and deserving all the honors of virtue, he paints Jesus Christ in every stroke of his pencil: the resemblance is so strong, that all the fathers have perceived it, and that it is not possible to mistake it. What prejudices, what blindness must they have, who dare to draw a comparison between the son of Sophroniscus and the Son of Mary! What distance is there between the one and the other! As Socrates died, without pain and without disgrace, he found no difficulty in supporting his character to the end; and, if this easy death had not shed a lustre on his life, we might have doubted, whether Socrates, with all his genius, was any thing but a sophist. They say, that he invented morality. Others before him had practised it: he only said what they had done; he only read lessons on their examples. Aristides had been just, before Socrates explained the nature of justice. Leonidas had died for his country, before Socrates made it the duty of men to love their country. Sparta had been temperate, before Socrates praised temperance. Greece had abounded in virtuous men, before he defined virtue. But where could Jesus have taken among his countrymen that elevated and pure morality, of

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which he alone furnished both the precepts and the example? The most lofty wisdom was heard from the bosom of the most furious fanaticism; and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues honored the vilest of all people. The death of Socrates, serenely philosophising with his friends, is the most gentle that one can desire; that of Jesus, expiring in torments, injured, derided, reviled by a whole people, is the most horrible that one can fear. When Socrates takes the poisoned cup, he blesses him, who presents it, and who at the same time weeps; Jesus, in the midst of a horrid punishment, prays for his enraged executioners. Yes: if the life and death of Socrates are those of a philosopher, the life and death of Jesus Christ are those of a God. Shall we say, that the history of the gospel is invented at pleasure? My friend, it is not thus that men invent; and the actions of Socrates, concerning which no one doubts, are less attested than those of Jesus Christ. After all, this is shifting the difficulty, instead of solving it; for it would be more inconceivable, that a number of men should forge this book in concert, than that one should furnish the subject of it. Jewish authors would never have devised such a manner, and such morality; and the gospel has characters of truth so great, so striking, so perfectly inimitable, that its inventor would be still more astonishing than its hero."

Illustrations of passages in the New Testament, which refer to climate, places, offices, sentiments, manners, and customs among the Jews, in the time of our Saviour.

Continued from page 152.

20.

Matthew iii. 5, 6. "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were BAPTIZED of him in Jordan, confessing their sins."

THE inquiry, which was proposed to John, by the priests and Levites, whom the Jews sent to him from Jerusalem, "why baptizest thou, IF thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?" (John i. 25.) very plainly intimates, that the Jews would not have been surprised, if "*Christ*, or *Elias*, or *that prophet*," had baptized. Their question implies, that the rite of baptism was familiar to them; but they would know, *by what authority* John exercised his baptism, and what was *the purpose*, for which he used it. How far then are these intimations confirmed by facts?

There is no doubt, that baptism had been used as a religious rite by the Jews, several centuries before the era of the gospel; and that it was applied, with circumcision and sacrifice, in admitting proselytes, or converts from paganism, into the Jewish church. It was a common saying of the Jews, "no one is a proselyte, until he has been circumcised and baptized." This practice, the Jews say, continued to the reign

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of Solomon; but at that time, proselytes became so numerous, that they were admitted by baptism only. There were "proselytes of the gate," and "proselytes of righteousness." The former did not adopt the ceremonials of the Jewish law; but the latter were received into the church by baptism, and were not only thought to be cleansed from Gentile pollution, but were permitted to marry a woman of Israel, and their offspring were admitted to every Jewish privilege.

Says the Babylonian Talmud, "Proselytes are not admitted into covenant, but by circumcision, [baptism] and the sprinkling of blood."—Again, "No one is a proselyte, till he has been circumcised and *baptized;* and if he be not *baptized*, he remains a Gentile." Abundant evidence of the early use of baptism by the Jews may be obtained by any one, who will recur to the authorities, to which we shall refer at the end of this article. Whether their law, as they supposed, required the use of this rite in the admission of proselytes into their church, may perhaps be considered as very questionable. But so they understood, and so they practised it; and the existence of the custom, at the time of Christ, and before his coming, being admitted, we can not only account for the expectation of the Jews, that "the Christ," and "that prophet," who they knew was to precede him, would baptize, but for other circumstances, concerning this rite, about which there has been much doubt, and perplexity, and contention, and separation.

There was a triumvirate, or council of three, who had the entire power of admitting to baptism. When a proselyte expressed his wish to be received into the church of the Jews, these officers examined him, as to his motives and dispositions; taught him at large the fundamentals of their law; enumerated the privileges, which distinguished the people of God; and repeated the promises, which they believed would be accomplished to every Israelite. Children were generally baptized with their parents; but if parents, who had been made proselytes, died before the baptism of their children, the council of three took care of their baptism. "If an Israelite," says Maimonides, "takes or finds a heathen infant, and baptizes him for a proselyte, he becomes a member of the church." Says the Talmud of Babylon, "a little child, who is a proselyte, is baptized by the sentence of the Sanhedrim. If his father be dead, and his mother lead him that he may be made a proselyte, the triumvirate become to him, in this service, instead of a father." And again, "If, when one is a proselyte, his sons and daughters become therefore proselytes, all the advantages, received by their father, extend also to them." Again, "When they are adults," says rabbi Joseph, "they may retract; but this is understood of little children, who were made proselytes with their father." Again, "If a female Gentile be made a proselyte, while yet her child is unborn, the child need not be baptized; for the baptism of his mother answers also for

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him." Concerning the age of the child to be baptized, the rule was—"any male child of a proselyte, under the age of thirteen years and a day, and a female, under the age of twelve years and a day, were baptized as infants; at the request, and by the assent of the father, or the authority of the council." If they were above that age, they consented for themselves. Not only did many of the Gentiles receive the law of Moses, and bring their children with them into the Jewish church, but it was a custom of the Jews in war, to bring away the children of the people whom they conquered, either to adopt them as their own, or to employ them as servants; and one of the most diligent and able inquirers, concerning all the peculiarities of this people, affirms, that "the baptizing of infants was a thing, as well known in the church of the Jews, as ever it has been in the christian church."

Consider then, 1. That the Jews had used baptism, as a rite by which they initiated converted Gentiles into their church. It was, in their view, therefore, *a proper rite of initiation;* and if administered to any of their own nation, it must have implied to them, that a new dispensation was given, into which they, who received the rite, were baptized. This will account to us for the inquiry, "why baptizest thou, IF thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?" It will also account to us for the readiness with which the people received the baptism of John. They believed that the Messiah was immediately to come, and were eager to be made *acknowledged* proselytes, or converts; as Gentiles were made proselytes, or admitted to the privileges of the Mosaic dispensation.

2. John took baptism as he found it, and suggested no change in the subjects of it. Can we suppose then, that men and women, who had always seen children baptized with their parents, would fail of bringing also *their* children, and of obtaining for them privileges, which they deemed so important, as an admission into the dispensation—the kingdom of the Messiah?

3. No change in the subjects of baptism was suggested by our Lord. But if he intended, that a change so important, as the exclusion of infants, should have been made, would he not have required it? and would not the evangelists have recorded the requisition? If it was a custom, in his time, to baptize the infants of proselytes, or converts, does not the single circumstance, that he *did not forbid* their baptism, prove, that *he intended that they should continue to receive it.*

4. If a missionary, who has lived with those only, who practised the baptism of infants, and who himself had always believed in its propriety, should receive a commission to "go, and convert, and baptize a tribe, or people," would he doubt whether he was to baptize also the infant children of those, who were converted by his preaching? And was it not in this general language, that our Lord commissioned his apostles? those apostles, who had been accustomed all their lives to see infants baptized with their parents?

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5. Is it said, that Christ required, that they be baptized, who "*repent* and *believe?*" Gentile converts were required also to repent and believe, before they could be admitted into the Jewish church. But this requisition did not exclude *their* infants;—and why should it *ours?*

6. Considering the use of the ordinance among the Jews, and the subjects, which they admitted to it, how would they naturally understand the words of Peter, (Acts ii. 39.) "the promise is to you, and to your children?" It was in Jerusalem, at the time of the passover, when the city was filled with Jews, that Peter made the address, from which these words are taken. Three thousand, we are told, were converted, and eagerly inquired of the apostles, "men and brethren, what shall we do?" Hear the answer, and give to the expressions the construction, which they naturally demand. "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost; for the promise is unto you, and *to your children.*" It had never entered into the mind of a Jew to doubt, whether his infant children were *proper subjects* for the reception of an ordinance, which admitted them into covenant with God. They would have considered the denial of this ordinance to one of their children, as the greatest of injuries. And surely no language could be adapted, more directly than this of the apostle, to confirm this sentiment.

7. On the supposition, that our Lord intended that baptism, in conformity to established usage, should be administered to infants, as well as to their converted parents, have we reason to expect more plain intimations of it, than in the expressions, "suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for *of such is the kingdom of heaven?*"—"Lydia was baptized, and *her household?*"—"The keeper of the prison was baptized, he, and *all his*, straightway."—"I baptized," said Paul, "*the household of Stephanus.*" Viewed in connexion with the usage of the Jews, this mode of expression appears to me to be a very strong presumptive evidence, that no change in this respect was made in the administration of the ordinance. Is it not, I would ask, the very manner, in which we might suppose that it would be mentioned, if the practice of the Jewish church, of baptizing infants, had been continued by the apostles?

In some future article, we may resume this subject.

[See Lewis' Orig. Heb. vol. 3, 4, p. 456 and seq. Watton on the traditions and usages of the Scribes and Pharisees in the time of our Saviour, vol. i. p. 102. and seq. Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. and Tal. on the verse. And Wall's history of infant baptism, vol. i. p. 65—95.]

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ACCOUNT OF A RELIGIOUS SOLDIER.

[Abridged from the Christ. Obs. for Dec. 1802.]

Sir,

Shortly after the return of the Duke of York from Holland, one of the regiments which had suffered very materially in the different engagements, was in my parish. A private soldier called upon me one evening after divine service, with a request, that I would explain a particular part of my discourse, which he had just heard, expressing at the same time much interest in the general subject of it. I found him to be a very well informed man, of distinguished piety and much religious knowledge. His language and address betrayed evident marks of strong natural sense, aided by an unusual acquaintance with the word of God, and the operations of his grace upon the heart.

He frequently called on me during the continuance of the regiment in my neighbourhood, and every succeeding interview gave me fresh proofs of his religious attainments.

At length the regiment, having nearly repaired, by fresh recruits, the loss sustained in Holland, was ordered to join a camp then forming, for the purpose of collecting troops for the Egyptian expedition, under the command of Sir Ralph Abercrombie. A few days before their departure W. brought with him another private of the same regiment, who had expressed a particular desire to speak with me, but of whom he knew very little, except that in some of the engagements in Holland he had been observed voluntarily to seek danger, and needlessly to hazard his person, as if with a desperate resolution of ridding himself of life. On being introduced to me alone the stranger said, that he hoped I should excuse the liberty he had taken of coming to request that I would purchase a small parcel which he had brought, in order to enable him to supply himself with a few necessaries preparatory to his voyage to Egypt, as he had no other means of raising a little money.

On opening his parcel, which he did not do without some confusion, it proved to consist of some clergyman's bands, one or two religious books, and some manuscript sermons. "Sir," said he, "you will hear with surprise, and I cannot mention it without some uneasiness, what I have for a long time concealed from every one around me, that I am in reality a brother clergyman, though now disguised in the habit of a common soldier. My father is a clergyman in Wales; he educated me himself for the church, and procured me ordination with a title to a curacy at —— in the county of W—: my name is E—. I continued upon that cure three years, during which time, I am sorry to say, through much imprudence and inattention to the decorum which suited my character, I contracted several debts, which I had neither means nor prospect of paying. Fearing disgrace and imprisonment, and knowing my father's inability to assist me, I quitted the town, and

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formed the resolution of enlisting as a soldier, which I shortly afterwards did, and was soon sent on the expedition to Holland, whence I lately returned. That you may have no doubts as to the truth of my story, which may possibly induce you to sympathize with a brother clergyman in distress, I will show you several letters and papers, which, when you have read, I trust you will give me credit for the truth of my relation." He also wrote some sentences in my presence, which proved his hand-writing to be the same with that of the manuscript sermons he had requested me to purchase. On putting a variety of questions to him, I felt fully satisfied as to the truth of his story.

I urged the duty of endeavouring to return, if possible, to the discharge of his ministerial duties, with a mind influenced and improved by the experience of past hardships and misfortunes. I entered into a long conversation with him on the nature and design of christianity in general, as well as the pastoral office in particular; examined him as to his views of the doctrines of the gospel, and explained my own to him very fully: I entreated him to take what I had said in good part, and urged him, by every sacred consideration, to act the part, which it appeared to me his duty and interest to adopt. He said but little in reply, and almost declined saying any more. I therefore purchased his little parcel, gave him a couple of books, and dismissed him with a blessing, once more intreating him to lay to heart what I had said. In two days the regiment went away, nor did I see W— or Mr. E— before their departure.

In June last my old acquaintance W— called upon me, and said he was just arrived from Egypt, and had a great deal to say to me. "I have now," continued he, "a story to relate, which I am certain you will feel a deep concern in. You, without doubt, remember that young clergyman whom I brought to your house the year before last, the Rev. Mr. E—. At that time I knew very little of him; he however, shortly after we had left you, observed with some emotion, that what you said to him made more impression upon his mind, than any thing he had ever heard in the course of his life. He then made me also acquainted with his history. From that time I was confined in the hospital with a fever, and did not see him again before our departure for Egypt. We embarked on board of different ships; it was not therefore till our arrival at Malta, that we met together. Mr. E— took an immediate opportunity of saying, 'W— I have long wished to see you, I want to tell you how greatly indebted I feel to that dear friend of yours at ——. I can never forget him. His words made a deep impression on my heart, and I trust, by the blessing of God, they will make a still deeper.'

"I found, on conversing with him, that since I saw him he had become affected with a deep sense of his spiritual danger, and by meditation and secret prayer during the voyage had acquired much insight into religion. He

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showed strong marks of penitence and gave a favorable hope of an important change having taken place in his views and dispositions. I was always happy to find, on the reassembling of the regiment after the voyage, that among the recruits were a few very seriously disposed. Mr. E— and myself soon formed a little religious society amongst them, which gradually increased to twenty four: we met as often as possible to read the Bible together, converse on the concerns of eternity, and unite in prayer to Almighty God for his blessing on our endeavours. We derived much benefit from these meetings. Mr. E— in particular expressed himself highly delighted with such a profitable mode of passing those hours, which in our line of life are too generally devoted to drinking, debauchery, and profaneness. In his confidential conversations with me he frequently mentioned your name and showed me the substance of your friendly advice to him, which he had from memory committed to paper.

"When we arrived on the coast of Africa, Mr. E— and myself were in the same boat at the time of our landing at Aboukir. Throughout the whole of the tremendous fire which for a considerable time the French artillery kept up on us, I observed great coolness and patient fortitude in his countenance. His deportment was very different from what I had seen when we served together in Holland. At that time he always appeared desperate and careless; now I thought I could perceive a courage blended with humility, which evidently proceeded from a much more exalted source. We both, by the mercy of God, escaped unhurt that day. Our little society continued its meetings as regularly as the trying circumstances of our situation would permit. Mr. E— was three or four times engaged with the enemy afterwards, and always behaved, both before and during the battle, with much steady and godly courage. On the evening preceding the 21st of March our whole society met together. Mr. E— said in the presence of the rest, 'I cannot account for the strong impression which has seized my mind, that I shall not survive the event of tomorrow's engagement. No such prepossession ever occupied my thoughts on any former occasion. I feel therefore strongly affected by this; but if it be thy will, O God, thy will be done!' We then united in prayer for him, for ourselves, and for all our brethren in arms, beseeching God to prepare us for the awful trial, and give us grace, either to meet death with joyful hope, or to receive his sparing mercy, if our lives should be preserved, with gratitude. Knowing the importance of the next day's battle, and the little chance we stood of meeting again in this world, we embraced each other with peculiar attachment, and mutual recommendation to the God of battle and the preserver of souls. Oh, Sir, it was a happy but trying season for us; I saw Mr. E— an hour before the horrors of that bloody day commenced; his words were, 'Pray earnestly for me, and if I am killed, and you should be

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spared, give my last blessing to your worthy and dear friend at ——. Tell Mr.——,' continued he, 'that I owe him more than words can repay: he first opened my heart to conviction, and God has blessed it to repentance; through the unspeakable mercies of Christ I can die with comfort.'

"After the severe engagement which followed, wherein the brave Abercrombie fell, according to agreement, our little society met. Every life was spared except that of poor Mr. E——, whose head was taken off by a cannon ball in an early period of the action. Such was the will of God. Whilst, therefore, we returned hearty thanks for our preservation, we blessed God's goodness for sparing the life of our departed brother, till by a lively exercise of faith and repentance, as we had every reason to trust, God had made him his own. I now also bless God, that I have had this opportunity of seeing, and relating this story to you, which I know you rejoice to hear."

Without farther comment, Mr. Editor, I send you the above relation which I have committed to writing with as much faithfulness and accuracy as I am able.

J. R.

WHAT IS THE SCRIPTURAL MEANING OF THE PHRASE "*THE SPIRIT OF GOD*?"

It being impossible to understand the scriptures without understanding the meaning of the *words* and *phrases*, and as the phrase "the spirit of God" is frequently used by the inspired writers, the friends of truth must be interested in the present inquiry. A thorough investigation of the subject must necessarily be of considerable length; the discussion will therefore be divided into several sections.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

1. As the terms *God*, *Lord*, and *Lord God* are used in the scriptures as titles of the same Supreme Being, so the phrases "the Spirit of God," "the Spirit of the Lord," and "the Spirit of the Lord God," are of the same import.

2. Whatever may be intended by "the Spirit of God;" the same is intended by the phrase "my Spirit," as used by God; "thy Spirit," as used by inspired men in their addresses to God; and "his Spirit," when speaking of God.

3. As the pharses "Holy Ghost," and "Holy Spirit," are only different translations of the same original words, the meaning of each is the same.

4. Three distinct opinions have been entertained on the question now before us. Some have supposed that by "the Spirit of God" is intended a distinct person in Deity, equal with the Father. Another class have supposed, that by the same phrase a *person* is intended, who is *dependent* on the Father. A third class have supposed that a person distinct from the Father is not intended, nor any thing more than the Spirit of the Father; that is, his energy, fulness,

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or all-sufficiency, by which he produces effects, or endows men with supernatural gifts or powers. It will be proper here to remark, that these three classes of divines will agree in this; that in many instances one or another of the phrases in question signifies, not the *agent* or the *power* by which persons are endued, but the *gifts bestowed*. In such cases the name of the cause is given to the effect.

5. As the inspired writers were all of the same nation, and as the ministry of the Messiah was among that people; it is reasonable to suppose, the terms in question are used in the same sense in the Old Testament and the New. The Jews were in possession of the Old Testament when the Messiah appeared among them; to these writings he often appealed and referred, and he even quoted from those scriptures some of the phrases under consideration. It would then be highly unreasonable to suppose, that he and his apostles used such phrases in a sense, which had been unknown to the Jews, and that too without giving any intimation of the fact. If therefore we can ascertain the meaning of the phrases, as used by Moses and the prophets, we may be safe in the belief, that such was their meaning, as used by Christ, his apostles, and his evangelists.

6. "Indeed, the primitive meaning of the word πνευμα is *breath*, from πνεω, *I breathe*." Such is the testimony of that eminent and candid critic Dr. Campbell. Many other witnesses might be produced, but it is believed; that very few men of learning will controvert the correctness of what the Doctor here affirmed. In the scriptures we have the same original word for *breath*, *wind*, and *spirit*. The same original phrase is sometimes translated "the Spirit of God," and at others, "the breath of God." In agreement with these we have the phrases "the *spirit* of the Lord" and "the *breath* of the Lord."

As our *breath* is something which proceeds from our mouth and nostrils, so the Spirit of God is called "the *spirit* of his mouth," and "the *breath* of his mouth," and "the *breath* of his nostrils." "By the *blast* of God they perish, and by the *breath* of his nostril are they consumed." Job iv. 9. The same idea is expressed 2 Thes. ii. 8. "Whom the Lord shall consume with the *spirit of his mouth*." In agreement with the primary meaning of the word *spirit*, our Saviour speaks of "the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit," as *proceeding from the Father;* and to give his apostles a symbol and a pledge of the promised communication of the spirit, he *breathed* on them, saying, "receive ye the Holy Ghost," that is, the *Holy Spirit*, *Holy Breath*, or *Divine Inspiration*.

Words and phrases, which were originally applied to corporeal objects, are frequently used in reference to God, to denote something in him answerable to what is denoted by the same words when applied to men. Thus we read of the *hand* of the Lord, his *feet*, his *eyes*, &c. not that he has corporeal *hands*, *feet*,

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or *eyes*, but to signify something in him, which answers the purpose of those members in the human body. On the same principle we read of the "*breath* of God." Men by their *breath* articulate sounds, form words and sentences, express the thoughts, feelings, and energies of their minds, communicate knowledge to others, and produce effects *in* them and *by* them. What astonishing effects are often produced by the *breath* of an able orator. With what facility will he *inspire* an audience with his own sentiments and feelings, and prepare them to execute his purposes of mercy, or of vengeance. If an accomplished speaker, a Demosthenes or a Cicero, a Chatham or an Ames, by the energy of his own *breath*, can inspire an individual or an assembly, with *knowledge*, *sentiments*, *desires*, *fortitude*, *consolation*, and *vigor*, what may not be done by the *breath* of the Almighty? And what is more common than to personify the breath or speech of an orator, and to represent it as an agent in producing effects?

THE FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES OF CHRISTIANITY,

OR

THE CHRISTIAN CREED IN "FIVE POINTS."

I BELIEVE—1. That "unto us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him: and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." 1 Cor. viii. 6.

2. That "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii. 16.

3. That "Jesus Christ died for our sins, that he was buried;" that "God raised him from the dead;"—"him hath God exalted, with his own right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour;" that "the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. Acts v. 30. xiii. 30. John v. 28, 29.

4. That "God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness;" that the Lord Jesus "is ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead;" that "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." Acts x. 42, xvii. 31. 2 Cor. v. 10.

5. That "love is the fulfilling of the law;" that for a man "to love God with all the heart, with all the understanding, and all the strength, and his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices;" that christians should "walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time;" and "*above all things have fervent charity among themselves.*" Rom. xiii. 10. Mark xii. 33. Col. iv. 5. 1 Pet. iv. 8.

The first of these articles is stated by the apostle, as the faith of christians, in contrast

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with the faith of the heathen world.

The second contains the glad tidings of great joy, as stated by our Saviour.

The third is what the apostle of the gentiles "first of all," or among the chief things preached to the Corinthians—what Peter preached to the Jews—and what our Saviour taught respecting the general resurrection.

The fourth contains the doctrine of which Paul told the Athenians, that God had "given assurance to all men," in raising Jesus from the dead—what Peter said that Jesus commanded the apostles to preach and to testify—and what was abundantly taught by Paul in his epistles.

The fifth contains a summary of christian duty, as taught by Christ and his apostles.

BENEVOLENT EFFORTS OF THE QUAKERS

FOR CIVILIZING THE INDIANS.

It will probably be *news* to many of our readers to be informed of the efforts of that sect of christians, called *quakers*, or *friends*, for civilizing the Indians of this country. Great are the obligations, which the people of the United States are under, to endeavour to ameliorate the condition of the natives; and to the benevolent mind it must be pleasing to see, with what wisdom, simplicity, and prudence, the quakers have conducted their efforts for that desirable object. Their example may be worthy of imitation, and their success may afford encouragement to other sects of christians to "go and do likewise." At a yearly meeting of the friends of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, A. D. 1795, a committee was appointed for the avowed purpose of "promoting the improvement and gradual civilization of the Indian natives." This committee addressed circular letters to those tribes, which were in the vicinity of Pennsylvania, accompanied with one from the secretary of state, expressive of the approbation of the president of the United States. These letters informed the Indians of an intention to befriend those, who should soon apply for aid. "The Oneidas, and those Indians settled on the Oneida reservation, comprehending the Stockbridge and a part of the Tuscaroras, were the only tribes, who, at that time, appeared willing to be instructed in husbandry."

In the summer of 1796 three friends settled among the Oneidas. Proposals were made to the Indians to excite them to cultivate their lands, and an example was given by the three friends. The next winter a school was opened for the instruction of children. In 1798 the friends introduced a blacksmith, built a house and barn, employed a number of young men and lads, from among the Indians, in cultivating the farm, and raised a large quantity of grain, hay, &c. which afforded proof to the Indians of the benefits they might derive from husbandry. "Several of them ac-

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quired considerable knowledge of the blacksmith's business, and many of their young women and girls were instructed in spinning, knitting, sewing and school learning." The next year still farther advances were made. Several Indians cultivated lots of land for themselves, which they sowed with wheat. The Indians were sensible, that what had been done for them by the friends must have cost a large sum, and not knowing any instance, in which the white people had befriended them in such a manner, "but what, sooner or later, an interested motive" appeared, they began to fear that the friends intended to make a permanent establishment among them, and lay claim to some of their land. Knowing that this jealousy existed, and supposing that the instructions they had given to this people might enable them to get a comfortable living, the friends concluded to go from this tribe to another; and thus give convincing proof, that it was the good of the Indians, which they had in view. After some friendly conferences the business was closed; and in reply to a written address the Indians expressed their feelings in this manner:—

"*Brothers Onas attend*,

"You know you told us you came not amongst us to make us presents that would soon wear away, but to stay some time to instruct us how to gain a comfortable living, by tilling the ground as the white people do; now you have staid the time you proposed and have fulfilled all your engagements to our nation, and we hope we shall follow the good example you have set before us, which we know would be of lasting benefit to us; and thankfully acknowledge your kindness, having never heard of any people that had done so much for Indians without any view of advantage to themselves, which is a convincing proof to us, that you are our real friends; and we are glad the good Spirit has put it into your minds to assist others of our Indian brethren in learning the same good way of living, for which we also thank you; as well as for the good advice you gave us about the strong drink; and we will try all we can to persuade our young men to do better.

"And now, brothers, if we have done any thing that displeases you, we wish you would tell us, that our friendship may remain bright, for we know you are a true people, and we will keep this writing, and will tell our young men and children every year, that they may always remember your friendship; and we wish you may often remember and visit us, to see whether we grow better or worse."

Some of the Indian young women were brought by the friends into the vicinity of Philadelphia to be instructed, and some of the quaker women also resided among the Indians. The following extract is from a letter written by one of the Indian young women, after her return to the tribe, to a quaker woman, who had lived among the Indians. The extract is given, as written and spelt by herself. It will be copied to show the benefit, which the Indians derived from

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the friends. The letter was written in 1803.

"I have spun some flaxe and woole since I came home and made some cheese, to show our Indians how to make cheese, they been very much pleased to know how to make cheese. Some said they never thought Indians could make cheese so well. They been try to keep cows ever since to make cheese, and butter; some of them begin to sewe some flax, and good many of our Indian got sheepe and they found very good to keep sheep, meat good to eat and wool good for cloth. I hope we will do better ever year, good many has left of drinking and some drink very heard yet. I have been to see Oneidas, not longe go: I found they improve very much since thee come away, good many has new frame houses and frame barns, they improves very much since they left of drinking. I believe three hundred of man and women both left of drinking this some time; I hope they will keep their words good."

(To be continued.)

REMARKS ON JUDAH'S SPEECH TO HIS FATHER,

AS GIVEN BY JOSEPHUS.

In the speech which Josephus has put into the mouth of Judah, to persuade Jacob to consent that Benjamin should go with his brethren into Egypt, we find something worthy of very serious attention, and which is capable of being improved to great advantage. After stating the reluctance of Jacob to part with Benjamin, the historian says, "And Judah, who was of a bold temper upon other occasion, spake his mind very fully to him" —"That it did not become him to be afraid on account of his son, nor to suspect the worst, as he did, for nothing could be done to his son but by the appointment of God, which must also for certain come to pass, though he were at home with him. That he ought not to condemn them to such manifest destruction, nor deprive them of that plenty of food they might have from Pharaoh, by his unreasonable fear about his son Benjamin; but ought to take care of the preservation of Simeon, lest by attempting to hinder Benjamin's journey, Simeon should perish."

The speech here ascribed to Judah was probably the fruit of the historian's imagination. Whether he meant to represent Judah as inconsistent with himself, or whether he were not apprized of any inconsistency in the case, must be to us a matter of conjecture. However this might be, certain it is, that the sentiment implied in one of the pleas directly contradicts that, which is implied in the other. In the first plea Judah is represented as endeavouring to remove his father's objections on this ground, that no evils could befal Benjamin but by the appointment of God; and those evils, which God had appointed for him would certainly take place, whether he should go into Egypt or tarry at home. This was equivalent to saying, if it be appointed for Ben-

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jamin to suffer calamity by going into Egypt, he will suffer by going into Egypt, whether he shall go or not; if he shall remain in Canaan, still he will suffer all the consequences which would result from going into Egypt.

Now observe the inconsistency; although he has argued, that Benjamin will be just as safe in going into Egypt, as in tarrying at home; that no evil could befal him by going into Egypt but what would as certainly befal him if he continued with his father; yet on the contrary he pleads, that his father ought not, by refusing to let Benjamin go, to expose the whole family to manifest destruction, or deprive them of the plenty of food which they might obtain from Pharaoh; and moreover, that his father ought to take care for the preservation of Simeon, who was already in Egypt, lest by withholding Benjamin, Simeon should perish.—Here Judah appears in a moment to forget all he had said about the certainty of what was appointed by God, and reasons upon the principles of common sense and experience. In perfect consistency with the first plea, the father might have replied to the last in this manner:—"Now, my son, according to the principle you assumed in the first place, there is no occasion for your urging me to let Benjamin go with you. No evil can befal *you*, or *any of the family*, but by the appointment of God; and that will certainly come to pass, even if I consent to Benjamin's going into Egypt. You speak as though, for want of bread, "manifest destruction" were staring us in the face; and you think we can have plenty of bread if Benjamin should be suffered to go. You also speak as though, by withholding Benjamin, I shall expose Simeon to perish. But why do you argue in this inconsistent manner? If it be appointed by God that we shall have a supply of bread from the stores of Pharaoh, we shall have it even if you all tarry at home and give yourselves no farther concern about the matter. As to Simeon, the appointment of God is as certain to be accomplished in respect to *him*, as in regard to *Benjamin*. If it be appointed that he shall perish in the prison at Egypt, so it certainly will be, even if you go and redeem him from that state of confinement."

Thus inconsistent and self-contradictory were the supposed pleas of Judah. But such inconsistency and self-contradiction is no uncommon thing in a more enlightened age, than that of Judah or even of Josephus. At the present day, we hear people arguing in one case in the same manner as Judah is supposed to have done in his first plea; and we hear the same persons talk, and see them act, on the opposite principle. In regard to their spiritual and eternal welfare, multitudes reason according to the first plea, and say, "If I am to be saved, I shall be saved; if not, I shall be damned, let me do what I will. If I am to be converted, I shall be converted; if not, any thing I can do will be of no avail; I must wait God's time." On this fallacious and ruinous principle thousands perhaps make themselves easy in neglecting the means of salva-

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tion, or in attending upon them as though they had no relation to their final destiny. Yet in regard to their *lives*, their *health*, and their *property*, the same persons will act on the opposite principle. Observation and experience teach them—that if they wish to preserve their lives, to enjoy health, or to accumulate property, *means must be used* for these purposes, and they act accordingly.

But the appointment of God has the same relation to their lives, their health, and their property, that it has to their spiritual welfare and their eternal destiny; and it is as sure to be accomplished in the one case, as the other.

The result of the whole is this; in regulating our conduct, we have nothing to do with the purpose of God, any farther than to act under a firm belief that his counsel is perfectly wise and good, consistent with his *commandments* and *invitations*, his *promises* and his *threatenings*, and with the most *complete free-agency* in accountable beings; that it becomes us to act consistently, and to be as diligent in attending to the means of salvation, as we are in attending to means for securing or promoting our temporal welfare: and that those, who neglect the means of salvation, have no more reason to expect to be saved in their present course, than Jacob's family would have had, to expect to be saved from starvation in a course of neglecting to go where bread could be obtained. The opposite views of the purpose of God are delusive and ruinous in their tendency. Alas! for those who neglect the path of obedience, and the means of salvation, from the presumptuous hope that they shall be saved by the fore-ordination of God. A more direct road to perdition was never paved by the agency of the father of lies.

ADMONITION TO HEADS OF FAMILIES.

MALLET, the poet, and the appointed editor of lord Bolingbroke's posthumous works, was an infidel and in the practice of scoffing at every thing serious. A servant of his, who had made the improvement, which might be expected from hearing the irreligious and blasphemous conversation continually passing at the table where it was his place to wait, took an opportunity to rob his master. Being apprehended, and urged by his master to give a reason for this infamous behavior: "Sir," said he, "I had heard you, and your friends, so often talk of the impossibility of a future state, and so often declare, that after death there was no reward for virtue nor punishment for vice, that I was tempted to commit the robbery." "Well but," replied the master, "had you no fear of that death, which the laws of your country inflict upon the crime?" "Sir," rejoined the servant, looking sternly at his master, "what is that to you, if I had a mind to venture that? You and your wicked companions had removed my greatest terror; why should I fear the less?"

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CONFESSION OF CHUBB, A DEISTICAL WRITER.

"In Christ we have an example of a quiet and peaceable spirit, of becoming modesty and sobriety: just and honest, upright and sincere; and above all, of a most gracious and benevolent temper and behavior. One, who did no wrong, no injury, to any man; in whose mouth was no guile; who went about doing good, not only by his preaching and ministry, but by curing all manner of diseases among the people. His life was a beautiful picture of human nature, when in its native purity and simplicity; and showed at once what excellent creatures men would be, when under the influence and power of that gospel he preached unto them."

How could a man remain a deist with such views of Christ and his gospel? Pilate confessed, that he found "no fault at all" in Jesus, yet he delivered him to the Jews to be crucified.

IMPRESSIVE EXTRACTS.

"Were this an age in which any thing might be wondered at, it would be a matter of deserved admiration, that we are still so far from being cemented together *in the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace.* Must the fire of our uncharitable animosities be like that of the temple, which was *never* to be extinguished? However, I am sure it is such an one as was never kindled from heaven, nor blown up with any breathings of the holy and divine spirit." *Bishop Stillingfleet.*

"He that is the Lion of the tribe of Judah delights in the style of the Lamb of God, and is so termed by John the Baptist, his forerunner, in the days of his flesh, and by John the evangelist, his apostle, in the state of his glory. Neither was the holy spirit pleased to appear in the form of a falcon, or an eagle, or any other bird of prey; but of a *dove*, the meekness and innocence whereof our Saviour recommended for a pattern to all his followers. 'Above all things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness, and let the peace of God rule in your hearts.'" *Bishop Hall.*

"Look down, O Lord, upon thy poor dismembered church, rent and torn with discords and even ready to sink. Why should the neutral, or atheist, any longer confirm himself in his irreligion, by reasons drawn from our dissensions?" *I. Hales.*

"Lord! let no unreasonable stiffness of those who are in the right, no perverse obstinacy of those who are in the wrong, hinder the closing of our wounds; but let the one instruct in *meekness*, and be thou pleased to give to the other repentance, to the acknowledgment of the truth.

"And do thou so guide and prosper all *pacific* endeavours, that those happy primitive days may at length revert, wherein *vice* was the only *heresy*." *Dea. Hammond.*

"But men are now-a-days, and indeed always have been since the expiration of the first blessed ages of christianity, so in love with their own fancies and opinions, as to think faith and all Christendom are concerned in their support and maintenance." *Bishop Taylor.*

"If thou wouldst keep thyself from being a slanderer of others, addict not thyself violently to any one party or persuasion of men. For party taking will beget prejudice, and prejudice is the jaundice of the soul, which represents other men, and their actions, in the color which our own disease puts upon them.

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"Hence all those lying rumours and lying wonders, that one party invents to beat down the other. One party reports the other to be all *profane* and *superstitious*; and the other reports its opposite to be all *hypocritical* and *seditious*, and both suffer from each other's envenomed tongues; and between both, *truth* suffers, and *charity* perisheth, and is utterly lost. For shame, O christians! is this the way to promote God's cause or Christ's kingdom? Doth he or it stand in need of your lies? Will you speak wickedly for God, and talk deceitfully for him? Shall his honor be maintained by the devil's inventions? I beseech you, O christians! for the peace of the church, which else will continue sadly rent and divided; for the sake of christianity, which else will be discredited and reviled; for your brethren's sake, who else will be discouraged or exasperated; be very cautious what reports you either receive or make of others."

Bishop Hopkins.

"And so, indeed, it was with those first and best ages of religion; for no sooner did the gospel fly abroad into the world, but the love and charity of christians became notorious, even to a proverb; the heathens taking notice of the christians of those times, with this particular remark, *see how these christians love one another!*" *W. Cave.*

"There is *one* and that the *main* thing which we want; namely, the spirit of Christ, to animate us in the practice of his religion, without which it is dead, even as the body is dead, without the soul that quickens it." *Bishop Burnet.*

"You ought not to conceive a distaste for any man, or body of men, because they are of a different persuasion, sect, or party. Supposing yourself in the right; you pity *corporeal* blindness! Why should you not likewise compassionate, instead of being angry with the blindness of the *understanding*, when it cannot discern certain religious truths?

"Whether a good man, who is a misbeliever in some points, without any faultiness or irregularity of will, will be damned for his *erraneous* way of thinking, may be a question with some people; but I think it admits of none, that a man will be damned for an uncharitable way of thinking and acting."

J. Seed.

"Railing is the province which our adversaries have chosen, and let us leave it to them. For whatever success they meet with that way, as indeed they excel in it, we shall meet with none; but only make *the spirit of christianity* be misunderstood and ill spoken of by our own want of it.

"But to show passion and bitterness in any of these cases; to take pleasure in making men's mistakes or designs thought worse of than they are; to judge harshly of them with respect to another world, or to expose them to ill usage in this; to refuse them due allowances for human infirmity, or to be more backward to own their merits than to see their faults; *such behavior*, instead of promoting truth, will prejudice the world against it; will give unbelievers dreadful advantages, and *forever* prevent *that union among christians*, which would procure us, above all things, the esteem of men and the blessing of God." *Archbishop Secker.*

"Orthodox and heretic, papist and protestant, churchman and dissenter, all, in their turns, have thought proper to show their zeal against the *nation-destroying sin of toleration*, as it was called in Cromwell's time; and for fetching the devil out of other men's consciences, have made no scruple of giving him free entrance into their own, *not knowing what spirit they were of*. Good God! what amazing ignorance, prejudice, and presumption, that men, frail men, who know not the essence of a blade of grass, and are liable to oversight, misapprehension, and error, upon the plainest subjects, should dare to murder and damn their fellow creatures and fellow christians, for not agreeing with them in opinion, about the essence of the Supreme God! O, my soul, come not thou into their secret! Unto their assembly, mine honor, be not thou united!" *H. Taylor.*

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POETRY.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

"FATHER of all thy saints below,
Whose mercies still thy love proclaim:
Let all the world thy glory show,
And join to bless thy sacred name.

"Thy gracious purpose, Lord, fulfil,
And let us soon thy kingdom share;
That sons of earth may do thy will,
Like those who breathe celestial air.

"Our wants with every morning grow:
With daily food these wants supply;
And on our souls that bread bestow,
Which whoso eats shall never die.

"To sinners guilt and shame belong!
Yet grant us, Lord, thy grace to prove,
As we forgive our brother's wrong,
And trespasses repay with love.

"And in the dark and dreary day,
Fraught with temptation, pain, and woe,
Oh! guide us on our doubtful way,
Oh! save us from our watchful foe!

"For thou alone art God most high;
The kingdom and the power are thine;
Thy glory fills both earth and sky,
And through eternity shall shine."

C. J. H.

GOD THE REFUGE FOR THE AFFLICTED.

"When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the Rock that is higher than I."
Psalm lxi. 2.

WHEN gloomy fears oppress my heart,
And anxious thoughts arise,
When health and hope's bright beams depart,
And darkness veils my eyes;

Where shall my fainting spirit rest?
In what firm refuge dwell?
Say, who'll receive the weary guest,
And all my griefs dispel?

Dreams of my youth, so bright, so gay,
O lead me to your bowers!
There would my fainting spirit stay,
Crowned by your blooming flowers.

Ah! while I speak, they withering fall,
And youth itself has fled.
Friendship! on thee I fondly call.
Receive my weary head!

But why that silent, languid smile?
Where has thy brightness flown?
Fain would thy tears *my* griefs beguile;
But they bedew *thy own*.

Where is the *Rock*, whose lofty side
Repels the dashing storm?
O let me *there* my footsteps guide!
There shield my weary form.

On its firm brow sits Truth Divine.
There, mercy's rays are seen.
Yes I will make this refuge mine,
And on *this Rock* will lean! * *

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

THE BENEVOLENT PROJECT FOR AN "ASYLUM BANK."

A PRINTED communication has recently appeared, purporting to be an attempt, to excite public attention to the object of establishing a BANK for the benefit of the *needy* rather than the *rich*. We feel disposed to encourage benevolent institutions, and the project now before us appears to be decidedly of that character. The limits of our work are such, that but a summary view of the object can here be given. This will be done by quoting a few paragraphs.

"The *law of love*, or *charity*, forms a a great, and the most essential part of the Sacred Code. In scripture phraseology, it is called, 'a new commandment,' and 'the law of kindness,' and on account of its superlative excellence and dignity, 'the *royal* law.' Piety to-

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wards God, and the love of man, for his fellow men, are the essence of true religion, and it is declared by the great Law Giver of christians, that 'on these two commandments hang all the law, and the prophets.' It is also declared in the same code, that 'love is the fulfilling of the law,' and that 'he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law;' and further, that 'all the law is fulfilled in one word,' viz. 'thou shalt love thy *neighbour, as thyself*'

"It will be the object of the following essay, to shew that we are now presented with an occasion of obeying and practising upon the precepts of this 'law of kindness,' by doing much good to a great number of our fellow creatures, that we have the strongest obligations to the performance of it, and have the most powerful motives and encouragement to action, and that nothing but strenuous efforts to accomplish it, and disappointment on the trial, can satisfy the claims of christian charity.

"Among all the banks hitherto established, all the public purposes, which have been answered, and individuals and classes accommodated—Whether there is not, still, a class of people the most neglected, who have the strongest claims to the attention, and the fostering care of the government? In this class, or classes, may be numbered, the orphan, the widow, the unmarried woman, the minor, the cripple, the insane, the ideot, and to comprehend, in one word, a great number and variety—the *friendless.* By those last mentioned (including strangers, or aliens) it is meant to include any, or all descriptions of persons, which may not be properly classed, with either of those before mentioned, as they may, speaking generally, have some relation or friend, who are supposed to have some degree of concern for their welfare, but not in all cases willing, or perhaps capable of taking care of their interests—but the stranger is presumed to be destitute of such friends.

"Let us pay a momentary attention to some of these descriptions of persons.—So great is the imperfection of all human arrangements, and such the case of orphans and minors, &c. that a question here arises, whether their property would not generally be in a better state of security and a greater probability of accumulating in a bank, than in the hands of individuals? The responsible, troublesome, and sometimes expensive trust of executors, guardians, &c. would, in this way, be performed cheerfully, as far as relates to property, free of expense, by men who would have a common concern with the widow, the orphan, &c. in the security and increase of their property.

"If the commerce and wealth of our country have actually increased, as these numerous lucrative institutions would seem to indicate, and if there really are so great profits accruing to bank stockholders, as we daily hear—why should not the orphan, the widow, the minor, the unmarried woman, the mechanic, the mariner, the soldier, the stranger, the ideot, the cripple, the insane, the infirm, the distressed, of whatever age, sex, or condition—why should not they participate in these advantages, rather than trust the security of an individual, and reap, if not the golden harvest of some, let them at least be permitted to be gleaners of the silver field, and leave part of their gleanings to their needy heirs or friends. The main object of this inquiry then is to extend this guardian care, and the benefits of banking to all the descriptions of persons above mentioned, and to all others, whom it may be expedient to associate with them.

"Let then, at least, one bank be established, which shall embrace and nourish in its lap all such persons, of the above descriptions, as shall appear to desire it, and deposit their mites, with as many others of the non-descript classes, which require relief, and are the proper objects of it, as may be consistent with the nature of such a bank. To bring my ideas more to a point, and to give them some shape, let us, for example, call this the *asylum bank*, the benevolent, the humane, the philanthropic, or the guardian bank, or by any other name, which shall best express its appropriate purpose, and sufficiently distinguish it from common banks.

"If such a bank, as is here proposed,

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should be thought advisable, whatever principles or modifications of them may be adopted in its construction—considering its peculiar design and objects, should it not be under the more especial care and protecting wing of the government? Why may not the governor and council, (for the time being) be directors, or otherwise have some salutary, control in its affairs, at least for the same purpose as the state treasurer, in behalf of the commonwealth, is (ex officio) a director in the Union Bank.

"A bank thus nurtured and protected by the parental care of the government, and its security and prolific powers provided for and guarded by all the means which the ingenuity of man has devised, and which motives, prompted by humanity and interest, both conspire to excite:—Why may not such a bank become, as it were, 'A father to the fatherless, a husband to the widow, and a guide to the youth' —that shall be "eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame,"—that shall "strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees"—that shall be "a comfort to the mourners"—that shall "break the jaws of the wicked, and pluck the spoil out of his teeth"—that "will bring the blind into a street that they know not, and lead them into a foot path they are ignorant in." That "shall make darkness light before them, and the thing that is crooked to be straight." That "shall keep the simple folk in their right, defend the children of the poor, and subdue the oppressor."—That shall be as "a father to the poor, and the cause which they know not, have searched out."—That shall "deliver the poor from him that is too strong for him; the poor, and him that is in misery, from him that spoileth him"—That shall "say to them of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not."

"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped—then shall the lame leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.

"When the ear hears, it will bless you, and when the eye sees, it will give witness to you—because you have delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him—The blessings of him that was ready to perish will come upon you, and you will cause the widow's heart to sing for joy."

"The heart that feels for other's woes,
Shall find each selfish sorrow less;
The man who happiness bestows,
Reflected happiness shall bless."

SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

[From the Christ. Observ.]

THE first public report of this society was made in the month of May last.

The Sunday School Union was established in London, in 1803, and consists of teachers and other persons actively engaged in Sunday schools. The objects of this union are—1st. To stimulate and encourage each other in the education and religious instruction of the young. 2dly. By mutual communication to improve the method of instruction. 3dly. To promote the opening of new schools by their influence and personal assistance. 4thly. To print books, &c. suited for Sunday schools, at a cheap rate. 5thly. To correspond with ministers and others in the United Kingdom and abroad, relative to Sunday schools. 6thly. To promote the information of country Sunday school unions, which are expected to report regularly to this society, and are allowed to purchase its publications at reduced prices.

By the individual and collective endeavours of the members of this society, many persons have been excited to engage as teachers in Sunday schools; and the zeal of those, who were drooping in their employment, has been revived and increased. Particular attention has been paid to the religious instruction of the young, and many useful plans have been suggested and adopted.

By the influence and personal assistance of the members of this union,

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many new schools have been established and are now establishing; and many old schools have been increased and improved.

The following books have been published by the society, and have met with very general acceptance.

A plan for the establishment and regulation of Sunday schools.

An introduction to reading, part the first, compiled for the use of Sunday schools in general, of which 150,000 copies have been printed.

An introduction to reading, part the second, of which 85,000 have been printed.

A catechism in verse, of which 38,000 have been printed.

A select list of scriptures, designed as a guide to teachers for a course of reading in Sunday schools.

Also the first part of the introduction to reading, in a series of lessons for collective teaching.

The youths' magazine, a monthly publication, commenced under the auspices of this society, and is calculated to promote knowledge amongst the young; while it inculcates the fear of the Lord, and displays the inestimable treasures contained in the sacred scriptures. Out of the profits arising from its sale, donations of £50 have been offered to three different societies.

The committee have received interesting communications relative to the formation of Sunday schools in our West India islands. At St. George's, Bermudas, a Sunday school has been established, containing 60 children, principally blacks. At St. John's, Antigua, there is one school, containing 100 children, and another consisting of 650. A school has likewise been established in Sicily, among the soldiers' children, and one is commenced, or about to begin, at Gibraltar. To all these schools the committee have voted a donation of books, and they are happy to say, that through their representations, the patronage of our General Sunday School Society has since been extended to our foreign possessions.

A very respectable society has been formed in Ireland, entitled the "Hibernian Sunday School Society," which is likely to become exceedingly useful in that country; and two respectable country Sunday school unions, the Nottingham and the Hampshire, have been formed.

The Nottingham Sunday School Union was commenced more than two years ago, and has continued increasing since that period; and it appears by the last report received, that there are 1083 teachers, and 8440 children in connexion with it.

The Hampshire Sunday School Union was commenced about the same time as the Nottingham Union, and now consists of 283 teachers and 3955 children. The meetings of this Union have led to the formation of several new schools, to the improvement and increase of old established schools, which needed reviving, and have excited considerable interest and attention in favor of Sunday schools in general.

The Sunday schools, connected with this union, appear to be in a very prosperous state; and it is calculated, that in London and its vicinity, about 40,000 children are educated in Sunday schools, and that about 4,000 teachers are engaged in this work. The expenses of the Sunday School Union are defrayed by the small profits derived from its publications, without making any appeal to public benevolence.

The utility of Sunday schools has been proved by a test of nearly thirty years, and who can tell the benefits which thirty years more will display? Perhaps they may extend to the neighbouring nations, and be diffused throughout the world. While the Bible is printing in every language, the laboring poor must be taught to read, or it will be to them a sealed book. While faithful missionaries carry the everlasting gospel to the realms of ignorance, superstition, and vice, the most promising result of their labors will probably arise from the instruction of the young. Upon the whole, past experience fully justifies and demands the most ardent zeal, and the most active exertion, in promoting Sunday schools.

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To the editor of the Christian Observer.

I BEG leave to present you with an account of an association formed at Keynsham, near Bristol, about a year ago, for the more general and extensive reading of the scriptures.

I established twenty six different stations, at eligible distances, by reading at regular periods, every evening, at three or four houses, half an hour each. This was accomplished in about a week or ten days. The regulations subjoined I caused to be affixed in the most conspicuous places in the several apartments where the readings were conducted. Some of these have from thirty to near fifty names annexed, amounting in all to about 450 persons, of different denominations of christians, who attend these readings. On the 9th of Sept. 1811, I commenced the scriptural readings; and the success which resulted abundantly proved the blessing with which it was attended. The devout silence and respect which have almost uniformly followed the impressive reading of the Bible, have been highly encouraging, appear to insure the success of any similar attempt, and largely compensate for the exertion bestowed. The increase of the companies in some instances was very rapid; and in commodious apartments from 40 to 50 and even 70 perhaps, or upwards, have assembled. The number of readers soon increased to seven, and the minister read occasionally. The good effects, which have been noticed, (though, in some cases, only the remote cause) have been, a more general spirit of piety and scriptural research; a greater fear and shame of open vice; a more numerous attendance at public worship, and an accession of about 15 to 20 communicants. Many persons, embracing those constant opportunities with much gladness, and almost daily advancing in the knowledge of the scriptures, discovered all such testimonies of joy as prove most gratifying to a christian. It is humbly hoped, that the advantages of this plan will stimulate the similar exertions of many pious christians.

I am, &c.

The pleasing accounts of "Sunday schools" and "reading societies" in Britain, are introduced into this work, with a hope that some in this country will be induced to "go and do likewise." Such institutions and exertions promise a rich harvest of divine blessings. While they tend to promote christian knowledge, they also tend to eradicate the unhappy prejudices which exist in the minds of different sects of christians, one towards another; and to promote that love and friendship by which the disciples of Jesus are to be distinguished from the world.

Ordination.

Ordained at Lynn Rev. Isaac Hurd, September 15, 1813.

Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

Sept. 15, 1813. A sermon was delivered in Boston before the Massachusetts Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, by the Rev. Dr. Prentiss of Medfield.

Foreign Missions.

Sept. 16, 1813. A sermon was delivered in Boston, before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, by the Rev. President Dwight. Contributions on the occasion, for translations and foreign missions, amounted to 526 dollars.

Candidate for the ministry, recently approbated.

Mr. EDWARD EVERETT, Cambridge.

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THE

CRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

No. 7. NOVEMBER, 1818. Vol. I.

A SKETCH OF THE REV. THOMAS HOOKER:

Abridged from Allen's American Biog. and Hist. Dict.

Mr. Thomas Hooker, the first minister of Cambridge, Massachusetts, and one of the founders of the colony of Connecticut, was born in Leicestershire, England, in 1586, and was educated at Emanuel college. After preaching for some time in London he was chosen lecturer and assistant to Mr. Mitchel at Chelmsford in 1626. On account of his nonconformity he was obliged to flee to Holland about the year 1630, and he preached sometimes at Delft, and sometimes at Rotterdam, being an assistant to the celebrated Dr. Ames.

In 1633 he came to New England, and was settled at Cambridge, or Newtown, on the eleventh of October. In June 1636, he removed to Hartford in Connecticut. He died of an epidemical fever July 7, 1647, in the sixty second year of his age. As he was dying, he said, "I am going to receive mercy;" and then closed his own eyes, and expired with a smile on his countenance. Mr. Hooker was a remarkably animated and interesting preacher. He appeared with such majesty in the pulpit, that it was pleasantly said of him, that "he could put a king in his pocket." He has been called the Luther, and Mr. Cotton the Melancthon of New England. It was his custom to preach without notes. On a visit to Massachusetts in May, 1639, he preached on the sabbath at Cambridge, and governor Winthrop went from Boston to hear him. Having named his text in the afternoon, he proceeded about a quarter of an hour with great loudness of voice and vehemence of manner, when suddenly he found himself at a loss what to say. After several ineffectual attempts to proceed, he observed to the assembly, that what he intended to have spoken, was taken from him, and requesting them to sing a psalm, withdrew for half an hour. He then returned and preached about two hours, with wonderful pertinency and vivacity. After the sermon he said to some of his friends, "we daily confess, that we can do nothing without Christ, and what if Christ should prove this to be the fact before

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the whole congregation?" Dr. Ames declared, that he never met with Mr. Hooker's equal either in preaching or disputation.

While living in England he was invited to preach at the great church of Leicester, and one of the burgesses set a fiddler in the church-yard to disturb the worship. Mr. Hooker elevated his voice, and spoke with such animation as to rouse the curiosity of the man, and attract him to the church door. There he heard such solemn truths, as by the blessing of God were the means of his salvation. Though naturally irascible in his temper, he acquired a remarkable command of his passions. He was condescending, benevolent, and charitable. His benevolence was united with piety. In his family he exhibited a lively devotion, and all who resided under his roof were instructed and edified by him.

In giving the sketch of Mr. Howe, we had occasion to notice, that an intolerant spirit in England occasioned many worthy men to be driven into exile. By the same spirit, Mr. Hooker was compelled to leave his native country. But as the persecution of the christians in Jerusalem, occasioned a more extensive spread of the gospel, so it has been in many other cases. It is indeed a comforting consideration, that God is able to overrule such evil conduct, and make it subservient to the interests of truth and religion. Thus he has often done in time past; and his sufficiency is unchangeable. But while those who suffer, have this consolation, the guilty are not to be excused; they mean not so, neither do their hearts think so. The happy consequences which resulted from Mr. Hooker's coming to this country, are not to be imputed to the good will of those by whose oppressive conduct he was constrained to leave the land of his nativity. The case of Mr. Hooker is but one of a vast multitude, in which excellent men have been treated as *heretics*, by an assuming, self-sufficient and domineering clergy. Those of the present age, who are disposed to indulge an intolerant spirit, might profit by such admonitions, were it not that the misguided zeal, by which they are hurried on, closes their eyes and ears against every thing of an admonitory nature, and is very fruitful in furnishing excuses for the most flagrant improprieties. Thus it ever has been, and thus we may expect it ever will be, so long as such a temper is suffered to exist among christians. A blinding self-confidence is a never-failing concomitant of a persecuting spirit. Men of humble and candid reflection see too many innocent occasions of error, and too much ground to suspect themselves to feel at liberty to destroy others on account of their opinions.

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TESTS OF RELIGIOUS SINCERITY.

Connected with page 158.

HAVING in my former communication mentioned several imperfections, with which religious sincerity may be united, I proceed, according to promise, to give some of the most essential marks or tests of this temper. My christian friends, this is a subject of primary importance in religion. Without sincerity, our pretended obedience is sin; our religion but vanity and guilt. We cannot deceive God; we may deceive, perhaps we have deceived, ourselves. Examine yourselves then, whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves.

1. In the first place, you have great reason to doubt of your religious sincerity, if you make no progress in holiness. Every principle of real virtue is an active and a progressive principle. It cannot leave a man satisfied with his present attainments, and if you have thought yourselves long stationary in your religious characters, the probability is, that you have been long retrograding. The path of the just is as the shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day. He, who carefully examines himself, cannot avoid discovering his imperfections, and he, who is afraid to discover or is negligent in the search, has no sincere disposition to correct them. Whatever you may choose to call the ruling principle of a religious life, whether the fear or the love of God, whether it be gratitude, or humility, or ambition of intellectual improvement, all, all urge us forward to greater attainments. Is it love? Real love is never tired with pleasing its object, never at ease when it has a suspicion of offending it. Is it gratitude? Gratitude never thinks it has done enough; humility never feels itself secure, and love intellectual always grasps at something higher. If then, my friends, you find in yourselves a disposition to circumscribe the limits of your duty, if you find that you endeavour to steal as much as you can from your obligations, and give as much as you can well spare to the world and its pleasures; if you are continually comparing yourselves with others, and think you have done enough, when you have done more than they, you have great reason to doubt the sincerity of your religion.

2. In the second place, if your most secret and private actions are not as pure and correct as your public ones, depend upon it you have no claim to the praise of religious sincerity. I ask you then, if your intercourse with God in private is devout, or if your public reverence of religious institutions is only the result of your deference to the habits of the community. I ask you, if you prefer to give your alms in private, where no eye but God's discerns it, to giving them in public, where spectators will allow you the credit of the alms; or whether you are not uneasy, till by some means, your benefactions are known to others? I ask you, if in your most trivial negotiations you are as scrupulous and honest, as in your large and notorious transactions; and whether the absolute security from detection would not tempt you into any thing like injustice? I ask you, if your conduct in your families, and with those over whom you have control, or with whom you are intimate, is as carefully regulated by the laws of christian benevolence, as you would lead us to believe from your public conduct; or are you christian in church, and a tyrant at home? In short, is your religion a spirit which animates you, and not a countenance which you assume? Would it be the guide of your life, if there were no one to observe you, but he, "who seeth not as man seeth?"

3. Is your obedience universal and unlimited? This is a most essential test of our religious sincerity. Do you make no exceptions in favor of particular vices, and continue to live in some habits, which your conscience tells you are not precisely right? The meaning of that passage in James, which was before explained,* includes this test of our religious obedience.

* *Christian Disciple No. 2, page 49.*

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"Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all." Why? Because if he deliberately and habitually make an exception in favor of some passion, lust, or habit, he discovers that he really has no sincere respect to the authority which established the whole law.

There are several cases in human life which may illustrate the nature of this principle of religious obedience. What should we think, for instance, of the sincerity of that man's friendship, who should make all the professions of attachment, and appear through the greater part of his life devoted to a friend, who yet should deliberately desert him in his time of need, or betray, when tempted, one only of his most important secrets? Thus no religious obedience has any claim to the praise of sincerity, which is not unlimited and without reserve. A religious man will not say, I am not guilty of this or that sin, but I hope God will pardon me for a particular habit which I find it difficult to relinquish. Neither will he say, I am sensible of the guilt of a particular course of conduct, and if God spare my life, I will break it off at such a future time. O no! my dear friends! this is the most shocking hypocrisy. It is such trifling as nothing can atone for. The man of this partial obedience, and the man who is continually deferring the day of his repentance, is yet in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity.

Lastly—What appears to you the governing motive of your conduct? In those portions of your character where your zeal is most engaged, and your exertions most strenuous, what is your object? The promotion of your own interests and the interests of your party, or the benefit of mankind, the glory of God, and the cause of virtue? How far is your sense of your duty to God predominant in your life? Does it lead you to sacrifice your property, and your reputation, and whatever you hold most dear; or have you contrived to conceal, even from yourself, the real motives of your behavior; and to serve yourself of the name of religion, and of God's honor, when you have nothing of them but the name. In short, is not your reverence for God, your sense of religious obligation affected by the changes of the age, and the character of your contemporaries? Are you on the Lord's side, even if you stand alone?

My friends, this subject of sincerity is of infinite importance to us. It is the foundation, the grand preliminary of a religious character. It is indispensable to the acceptance of any of our services. Without it, our religion is our condemnation, our observances of its rites are the records of our sin. Without this, it is impossible to have any satisfaction in duty; religion will be our burden, God our terror, conscience a sting, and death will overwhelm us with inconceivable dismay. With this only can we assure our hearts before God. For if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things. But, beloved, if our hearts condem us not, then have we confidence toward God.

TERMS OF ADMISSION TO CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGES.

To the Editor of the Christian Disciple.

I WAS highly gratified by a communication in one of your late numbers on the *terms of christian communion*. You intimated at the close of that piece, that you hoped to make this the subject of future discussion. I trust, this promise will not be forgotten. No subject perhaps is more simple, and yet on none do we find greater or more frequent misconception. The church of Christ is shut on many, whom, as we have reason to think, Jesus would have received with affection; and the consequence is,

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that a disaffection is spreading itself through the community, which may ultimately have a very unhappy influence on our religious institutions.

My attention has been called to this subject by an application, which I lately received from a friend, whose moral and religious character I highly respect. He expressed to me, what indeed I well knew, his conviction of the truth and importance of christianity, and his desire to unite himself with the christian church, that he might at once bear his testimony to this divine religion, and avail himself of the instituted means of giving it an influence over his own heart. "But," said he, "the privilege is denied me. I live in a town where there is but one place of worship, one church, one minister; and this church and minister are narrow and exclusive in their sentiments. I am by no means inclined to excessive liberality, but the creed, to which my assent is required, contains articles, which shock at once my reason and my moral feelings. What must I do? The church is barred against me, and yet I am condemned for neglecting to enter it."

My sympathy with my friend induced me to speak at first with some warmth. I told him that I did not consider him bound to contribute to the support of institutions, from the benefit of which he was excluded; and that he would be justified in joining with men who were laboring under the same oppression in the formation of a new church on the broad principles of christianity. He answered, that the place of his residence was not sufficiently large for two societies, that it would be painful to him to be in any measure the cause of dissentions in the community, that he wished a mere peaceful remedy for the evil to which he was exposed.

To this case of my friend, I desire your attention, and that of your correspondents. It is not singular. In other parishes, some of the best men, I fear, are excluded from christian privileges by the operation of creeds, drawn up with little care, in "words which man's wisdom teacheth." The mass of the people, unaccustomed to inquire, and taking their opinions upon trust, receive without complaint the articles, which they find established in the church. But reflecting men, habituated to weigh the import of words, are shocked by some of the principles, which are offered to them as the substance of christianity, and from tenderness of conscience decline subscription. Thus the most intelligent and conscientious part of the community are sometimes found in the crowd who turn their back on the table of the Lord.

If we could bring together the various creeds which are imposed in our country, we should be struck with the extent of the evil here lamented; and some would be ready to ask how it is, that the christian church has continued to receive accessions, when the entrance to it has been so unwarrantably obstructed.

In one parish a man is required to believe, that there are three persons in one God. Unable to

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explain this language, and unwilling, in a solemn act of religion, to employ words which he does not understand, he desires to be told what the word *person* means. He is informed that the doctrine is too mysterious to be explained, that it surpasses all comprehension, that his duty is to believe and not to pry into the deep things of God. He answers, that he does not ask for reasonings to support the doctrine; he only wishes to know *what the doctrine is*, what is the import of the language to which he is expected to subscribe. Perhaps some attempt is made to satisfy this most reasonable request; but tenfold darkness gathers over the subject. The word *person*, however defined, always suggests to him the idea of a distinct individual or being. He asks, whether he must believe that three distinct beings make the one God. He is told no; that this is a damnable heresy; that this is to make three Gods. He answers, that after all his efforts, he can attach no other ideas to the article which is imposed on him. He does not deny, that to others of sharper vision this article may be sufficiently plain, but he begs that he may be released from assenting to a distinction too subtle for his feeble capacity, and that he may be received into the church of the saviour, whom he loves, on the ground of that good confession, which satisfied the apostles, *that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*. In support of this request, he asks whether the plain fishermen of Galilee, when they surrounded the table of their master, and received from his hands the bread and the wine, had heard any thing about three persons in one being, and whether any church can be injured by receiving members on the ground of the same faith which these old-fashioned christians possessed. But he pleads in vain. He is told, that in different ages the church needs different fences and securities, that all christians, whose hearts God has touched, assent without hesitation to these inexplicable words, and that the article to which he objects is one of the necessary methods of preventing the taint of heresy from spreading through the christian flock.

In another parish a man is called to give his assent to articles, which, in his view of them, offend not only his reason, but the best feelings of his heart. He is called to believe, that God brings men into existence wholly corrupt, and wholly unable to relieve themselves, that from this mass of corruption he has been pleased to select a number, whom, by his irresistible power, he rescues from sin, that he leaves the rest to the hopeless corruption in which they were born, and then plunges them into eternal flames, because they have not made themselves pure. All this appears to him to be fairly implied in the creed, to which his assent is required. His blood grows cold as he reads it. He offers his objections, and receives perhaps some ingenious replies; but still he cannot reconcile these doctrines with God's paternal goodness or with human responsibility. He is far from deny-

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ing the sincerity or christian character of those, who profess to discover in these articles the marks of God's infinite benignity, and the most powerful motives to obedience, but he asks that these articles may not be applied as a test to his own character. He is told however, that the creed of the church expresses the views in which regenerated minds agree, and that he must come with these views to the table of Christ, or not come at all.*

I have mentioned only a few peculiarities of opinion which are insisted on as essential to admission into the church. I have known a person prevented from joining a church, chiefly because he doubted whether the perseverance of saints was taught in the scriptures, as the doctrine is commonly understood at this day.† I lately heard of a woman of plain education, who was required to express her belief in the perfect consistency of predestination with man's free-agency.‡ Thus, the doubtful questions of metaphysics and theology, by which the most powerful minds have been perplexed and confounded, are to be settled by the common people, before they can be received into the family of Christ. Blessed Saviour, thou friend of the ignorant, who didst preach and adapt thy gospel to the poor, are these the conditions which thou requirest or approvest for admission into the number of thy people?

The probability is, that if all the church covenants of New England were collected, every christian among us would find several, to which he could not subscribe, and of course the most

* It is believed that few, who assent to the articles referred to in this paragraph, view them in the light the candidate is here supposed to do; but if they are capable of being thus understood, it is a sufficient reason for confining church creeds or terms of admission, to the language of the scriptures. And it is a weighty objection against foisting into articles of faith the words of man's wisdom in preference to such as the holy spirit teacheth. ED.

† It may be doubted whether any doctrine has been less understood, or more abused, than this, "That true saints will certainly persevere to the end of life." If it mean any thing worthy of our belief, it means that true saints will habitually continue in a course of sincere obedience to the commands of God. But how many, who profess to believe this doctrine, *prove* it to be false, by their own example, if we must admit that *they* were *ever* sincere christians! We are not however to be understood as denying the doctrine; but we *mean* to deny, that a man may be said to *persevere* in *obedience*, while he *lives* in *rebellion*; and we mean to affirm, that for a man to be consistent with himself in professing to believe the doctrine, his walk must be in the "path of the just," which "is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." ED.

‡ As we understand the terms, we see not the least inconsistency between *predestination* and *free-agency*; but as they are understood by many, there doubtless may be an inconsistency. But whatever may be supposed of the consistency or the inconsistency of these terms, we do not find that Christ or his apostles ever required an assent to an article of this nature, as a term of admission to christian privileges. What if God predestinated that every accountable being should act as a free-agent, and be rewarded according to his own works; would such predestination be inconsistent with free agency? ED.

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eminent saints would be excluded from several of our churches. There is reason to believe, that in some of our towns, men of the fairest characters, to whose uprightness the most important interests are entrusted, whose lives are most useful, whose charities are most extensive, whose conduct in their social relations is most blameless, and whose contributions for the ministry are most liberal, are denied the benefit of the very institutions which they support, and are virtually treated as heathens.

Were this a slight evil, I would not so earnestly urge it on the attention of christians. But is it nothing to shut a disciple of Jesus from the church and table of his Master? Is it nothing to expel those, whom Jesus invites? Is it nothing to limit the benefits of religious institutions? Do I not receive a serious injury when I am excluded from some of the most efficacious methods which my Saviour has appointed for improving my character, and preparing me for heaven? Shall I resist every invasion of my civil rights, and shall I suffer the dearer privileges of religion to be wrested from me? To exclude from the church those who profess to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour, and whose conduct is consistent with their professions, because they cannot assent to articles which are expressed in phrases of man's invention, and which are no where declared in scripture to be essential to the christian character, to do this is to assume a power, offensive to Christ, and injurious to man. How solemnly did our Lord warn his disciples, against despising the least of his friends? How fearful was the woe pronounced on those who should throw a stumbling block in the way of his feeblest followers? Can we guard too solicitously against the guilt of obstructing the progress of any, who discover a sincere regard to the authority of our common Lord?

The question now offers, what is the duty of those, who are excluded from the church by the operation of unscriptural creeds and confessions? This question is beginning to be agitated by laymen, and deserves the consideration of the judicious and experienced. What shall these persons do? Shall they leave the societies, where religious privileges are denied them, and form new churches on a scriptural foundation? or shall they seek admission into churches of other towns, which maintain catholic principles of communion? These are obvious methods of relief; but they are not without dangers. Will they not divide our churches, and give birth to many unchristain feelings? Can no milder method be devised? Cannot christian ministers be persuaded to review their creeds, and to ask themselves seriously, whether they contain no articles which a man may doubt and yet be considered, in the view of charity, a follower of Jesus? Cannot ministers be persuaded to employ their influence in substituting simple and intelligible declarations of scripture for ambiguous phrases and long contested doctrines?

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This is most devoutly to be wished, and this would at once remove the evil.

We hope that we shall not be considered as impeaching the christian sincerity of churches and ministers, whose creeds are open to objection. The injury they commit, though great, is unintentional. Their error belongs to the judgment, and not to the heart. Far from reproaching with bitterness, we would tenderly beseech them, as they revere the authority of our common Lord, as they regard the charitable spirit of his gospel, as they desire the peace and improvement of his church, that they will generally consider the evil which has now been exposed, and will most cautiously abstain from every act or requisition which may exclude from the fellowship and privileges of the church, those whom Jesus accepts, and who are equally entitled with themselves to the name of christians.

JONES' ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE FOUR GOSPELS.

In the introduction to Jones' *Illustrations* of the *Four Gospels*, a work of great learning and merit, lately published in England, I find the following statement. "A Sweedish professor has given an account of a Jewish sect still in existence, which was founded by John the Baptist, and which ascribed to him an authority superior to Jesus. This account is translated by Michaelis, who supposes that John the Evangelist wrote his gospel to confute the errors of the Gnostics, and of the Sabians, the name of which distinguishes the disciples of the Baptist. And so important does the German critic think the discovery to be, that the obscurity, in which St. John's gospel had been involved, was at once dissipated by it. Michaelis has applied the discovery to the elucidation of this gospel; but he does not, by what he calls a totally new light, appear to have been successful in removing its obscurities. If, however, he had perused the works of Irenæus, and the *recognitions* of Clement, with proper attention, he would have come at the truth in a direct road, and probably have met with complete success. Irenæus says, that John published his gospel to exterminate the errors of the Gnostics. This writer was a disciple of Polycarp, who had been personally acquainted with St. John. He had, therefore, the best means of information; and it appears probable, that the assurance of the object, which the evangelist had in view, thus impressed on his mind, first suggested the idea of writing an account of the Gnostic heretics." "The book, comprehending the recognitions and homilies, ascribed to Clement of Rome, is not deemed genuine by Lardner and some others, but the composition of an *Ebionite* towards the close of the second century. When duly examined, however, it appears to have been published much earlier. The

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subject of it, in general, is a detail of the dispute which the apostle Peter had with Simon Magus, in an interview referred to in the eighth chapter of Acts: and the object of the book is to refute the system which that impostor set up in opposition to the gospel. The recognitions and homilies are written with great elegance, and with a purity of sentiment (a few passages excepted) which might justly claim apostolic authority. In these performances, we learn the important fact, *that the first founders of gnosticism were disciples of John the Baptist.* And the natural conclusion is, *that St. John wrote his gospel to refute the errors of the gnostics, and of the disciples of John the Baptist.*"

To this extract, permit me to subjoin a few remarks. We are not to imagine, that John the Baptist himself formed a sect in opposition to Christ; or that *all* his disciples were gnostics; or that he taught opinions and doctrines such as were afterwards held by the gnostic heretics. But it is important to the biblical student to learn, that *some* of John Baptist's disciples did not believe in Jesus of Nazareth, as the Messiah; that from worldly views, they rejected Christ, and kept separate from his apostles and disciples, and introduced a motley absurd system of theology. Simon Magus was one of these pretended disciples of John, and affected to possess extraordinary power from heaven. His doctrine of supernatural beings was very absurd, and his morals very corrupt. He was supported in his claims by many Jews as well as heathens. So that the gnostic theory was a heterogeneous compound of Judaism and heathenism. If the first part of St. John's gospel is read with attention in reference to these suggestions, it will appear just and pertinent, where now, perhaps, it is obscure to some. We observe also, that possibly Lardner is not fully supported by ancient authorities, in rejecting the Clementine recognitions and homilies as spurious. He was a great critic in biblical literature; and has taught us in many instances to distinguish between genuine and reputed apostolic writings. By some learned men, however, he is thought to have condemned without sufficient reason and authority. And I suggest, whether the ecclesiastical inquirer would not find himself richly compensated by a careful examination of the recognitions of Clement. A. B.

THE BENEVOLENT EFFORTS OF THE QUAKERS

FOR CIVILIZING THE INDIANS.

Continued from page 170.

THE Seneca Indians, observing what good the quakers had done at Oneida, invited them to their country. This invitation was accepted. Three young friends with two of the committee went to the Indian towns, on the Alleghany river, and were

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well received. The committee explained to the Indians the object of their visit; and before they left them, held a conference with the Indians and endeavoured to persuade them to adopt the habits of the white people. The young men continued with this tribe, to instruct them, and to set an example of husbandry. Four of the committee visited the settlement the next year. They delivered a speech to the Indians on that occasion, in which they expressed their satisfaction on account of the improvements which had been made. Cornplanter, the chief, in behalf of the nation, replied, that "When the young friends first settled among them, many of his chiefs were averse to it; they had this summer several councils among themselves, respecting the young men, and all the chiefs seeing their good conduct and readiness to assist Indians, were now well satisfied."

From this place the friends went to the settlement on the Catarogus river. Wherever they went, they endeavoured to reform the habits of the Indians in respect to the use of ardent spirits, to instruct them in husbandry, in blacksmith business, and the use of mills. To instructions in these important branches of business, they added those of reading and writing, &c. The following extracts of speeches, letters, &c. from the report of the committee, will give some idea of the benefits the Indians received from the benevolent efforts of the quakers.

From Indians at Catarogus to the Quakers—1799.

"The instructions that you gave, pleases us very much in general; you may rely upon it that we are going to follow your directions; we have fully determined to leave off drinking whiskey, and if there comes traders on, we have determined to order them off the ground."

"Friends, Quakers, we hope you will keep your minds strong as you was at first, and we return you great many thanks for the kindness you have done already."

Remark of the committee, 1801.

"The Indians were become very sober, generally refraining from the use of strong drink, both at home, and when abroad among the white people. One of them observed to our committee, "no more bark cabin, but good houses; no more get drunk here now this two years."

Speech of a chief warrior to the Quakers.

"We shall often think of you whilst on your journey, and desire you to inform your chiefs at home, that we are thankful for the saw-mill irons, axes, hoes, ox-chains, &c. which they have given us.

"Brothers, we hope we shall give more attention to farming than we have hitherto done; we thank you for your advice about the saw-mill, and for your friend's consenting to remain with us awhile, to teach some of our people to work the mill."

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Letter from one of the Friends to one of the committee.

"Several families have got to the number of six and seven head of cattle with other useful animals, who had not any when this settlement was first made, owing, as they now tell us, to their great excesses in the use of whiskey, which at present seems much declined; not any is knowingly suffered to be brought into the settlements on this river."

Cornplanter's speech.

"Brothers, your young men and us have now lived together several years as brothers; when your young men came, the Indians were very ignorant, but now we are just beginning to learn; your young men do not talk much to us, but when they do, they speak what is good, and have been very helpful in keeping us from using spiritous liquors; as has also my brother.

"Brothers, we are all well satisfied with your conduct towards us; you have always done what you promised."

From the reports.

"In the evening when the friends were sitting with the chief warrior, he said he wished to ask them a question, but was almost afraid; they desired him to speak, and they would give him such information as they were able; it was, do the quakers keep any slaves? he was told they did not. He said he was very glad to hear it, for if they had kept any, he could not think so well of them as he now did. That he had been at the city of Washington last winter on business of the nation, and found many white people kept blacks in slavery, and used them not better than horses."

From letters of the friends with the Indians, to the committee.

"Neither of the mills are completely finished, owing to the coldness of the season, yet both so as to do business. The Indians have had considerable grinding done, and appear highly pleased to see the grain reduced to meal so much quicker than pounding it in their wooden mortars; a pretty ingenious Indian man, after having a grist of wheat of his own raising ground and bolted, said with animation, 'I think this will make the Indians see day light.'

"It is pleasing to find a disposition for improvement continues to prevail amongst the younger class of Indians; divers have now considerable corn to sell; they often express the satisfaction they feel in seeing the fruits of their own industry, and frequently observe, that when they followed drinking whiskey they could hardly clothe themselves, but by industry they now find that their substance begins to increase.

"The continued resolution of the Indians against the use of spirituous liquors, conduces much to the introduction and increase of civilized habits and it is obvious, that it has an improving effect on the other settlements of the Seneca nation."

Whether the object of the quakers extended to christianizing as well as civilizing the Indians, we are not informed. This however is probable, and

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that civilization was only a preparatory step. It is a question of importance, whether much success can be expected in attempts to christianize the Indians, or any savage tribes, unless they are preceded, or at least accompanied, with friendly efforts for civilization and the introduction of useful arts. Dr. Campbell, in a sermon preached before the society in Scotland for propagating christian knowledge, undertakes to show, that "the success of the first publishers of the gospel, is a proof of its truth." Among other considerations in support of this idea, he exhibits a contrast between the means used by the apostles, and those which have become necessary since miracles have ceased in the church. He remarks on the efforts and success of Roman Catholic Missionaries. As one of the most successful efforts he mentions the mission to Paraguay in South America. In stating the methods of proceeding he says—"It was more by insinuation and indirectly, than by open and professed teaching, that the knowledge of christianity was introduced by them. Their direct and only object long appeared to be, to teach those savages agriculture, the most necessary manufactures, the art of building, and the other arts most conducive to civilization; and when in this way they had sufficiently recommended themselves to their confidence, to take occasion of inculcating, especially on the children intrusted to their care, their religious principles. The method of the apostles was much shorter; they did not find the least necessity for such artificial management."

The Doctor does not mention this contrast by way of reproach to the missionaries, but as evidence that the success of the apostles is to be ascribed to such supernatural divine agency, as amounts to proof of the truth of the gospel. Accordingly, in the improvement of his discourse he observes—"Let it not be imagined, that what was said in regard to the use made of arts and sciences by the popish missionaries, was with a view to condemn or discredit such expedients. It was only with an intention to show that there were many causes to which the success of those missionaries, comparatively little, might be attributed without recurring to miracles; whereas there was nothing that could account for the astonishing success of the apostles in whom all those advantages were wanting, but miracles alone. It was not to depreciate the wisdom of man, but to show that "the foolishness of God is wiser." So far from condemning the Roman Catholics in this, I approve, I applaud their zeal, their solicitude, their perseverance."

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ON THE PHRASE "THE SPIRIT OF GOD."

Continued from page 180

SECTION II.

The five books of Moses are about a fourth part of the Old Testament. As he was the first and the principle writer of that part of the bible, if we can ascertain the meaning of the phrase "the spirit of God," as used by him, this will go far towards establishing its meaning throughout the scriptures; unless decided evidence shall appear, that it is used in a different sense by some other writer. We shall therefore place before the reader the principal, if not the only passages, in which this, or some equivalent phrase, occurs in the writings of Moses.

Gen. i. 2. "The spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Chap. xli. 38, concerning Joseph, Pharaoh asks, "Can we find such an one as this, a man in whom the spirit of God is?" Exod. xxxi. 3. "And I have filled him with the spirit of God in wisdom, and in all manner of workmanship." This is said of Bezaleel. Again ch. xxxv. 30—35, the account is given to the people. Moses says of God—"And he hath filled him with the spirit of God," &c.—In the following verses, others are represented as being endued in the same manner for building the tabernacle. Numb. xxiv. 2. Of Balaam it is said—"The spirit of God came upon him."

Such is the manner in which Moses used the phrase "the spirit of God." In every instance except the first, it is evidently used to denote *that* by which God endues men with supernatural gifts or powers, and prepares them as instruments for some work which he had assigned them. They were *inspired* according to the work they were appointed to perform, and this *inspiration* was called being "filled with the *spirit* of God."

In the preliminary observations, it was stated, that the words *spirit*, *wind*, and *breath*, are the same in the original. Gen. i. 2, might have been correctly and forcibly translated "The *breath* of God moved upon the face of the waters." This would have expressed the *energy* and the *ease* with which God produces effects. In Ps. xxxiii. 6, the word *breath* is given in the translation instead of *spirit*. "By the word of the Lord, the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the *breath* of his mouth. In Job xxxvi. 13, we have the spirit and the hand of the Lord used as synonymous: By his *spirit* he hath garnished the heavens; his *hand* hath formed the crooked serpent." By comparing these several passages, it may be seen, that no injury is done in translating Gen. i. 2, "The *breath* of God." And as God breathed into Adam the breath of life, so he has breathed into others supernatural gifts, according to his own pleasure.

There are other phrases in the writings of Moses, equivalent to "the spirit of God." Such are the following: Gen vi. 3. "*My spirit* shall not always strive with man, for that he also is

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flesh." Whatever might be the manner of striving, the spirit is that, by which God strove or operated. Numb. xi. 17. "And I will take of *the spirit* that is upon thee, and put it upon them;" that is, the elders. Then v. 25. "And the Lord came down in a cloud and spake unto Moses, and took of *the spirit* that was upon him and gave it to the seventy elders—when *the spirit* rested upon them, they prophesied." ver. 27, of Eldad and Medad it is said—"*the spirit* rested on them, and they prophesied in the camp." This being told to Moses he said, "would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put *his spirit* upon them." As Moses was himself endued in a supernatural or extraordinary manner, so others were made partakers of similar gifts to aid him in the work of judging the people of Israel.

In Deut. xxxiv. 9, we are told, that "Joshua was *full of wisdom*, for Moses *had laid his hands upon him*." From this we learn, that the gifts of the spirit were communicated by the laying on of hands by Moses, as they afterwards were by the apostles of our Lord.

Thus it appears from the writings of Moses, that by "the spirit of God," or the breath of God, is intended that, by which God operates or produces effects, and particularly that by which he communicates supernatural gifts and powers to enable men to execute his purpose.

The phrase "the spirit of the Lord" is used in the same manner by the subsequent writers of the Old Testament. Judges iii. 10. "The spirit of the Lord came upon Othniel." ch. vi. 3. "The spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon." ch. xi. 29. "The spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah." ch. xiii. 25. "The spirit of the Lord began to move Sampson." ch. xiv. 6. "The spirit of the Lord came mightily upon Sampson." Thus these several persons were stirred up and prepared for deliverers to the people of Israel; and thus all the mighty things done by them are accounted for by the sacred writer.

1 Sam. x. 6. we find Samuel the prophet saying to Saul, "The spirit of the Lord shall come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy." ch. xvi. 13. "The spirit of the Lord came upon David."—v. 14. "The spirit of the Lord departed from Saul." 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. David said, "The spirit of the Lord spake by me." This last text shows what is intended in the scriptures by the spirit's *speaking*. God endued men with his spirit, and they "spake as the spirit gave them utterance."

It is needless to mention all the passages, in which the phrases under consideration are to be found in the remaining books of the Old Testament.

Some of the most remarkable will be introduced.

Isaiah lxiii. 10. "But they rebelled and vexed his *holy spirit*." This probably means no more nor less, than that they vexed or provoked God. Respecting Moses it is said "they provoked *his spirit*." Ps. cvi. 33. This does not imply that the spirit of Moses was a person distinct from himself, or that Moses and his spirit were *two* persons.

Ps. li. 11. 12. "Take not *thy*

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holy spirit from me.—Uphold me with *thy free spirit.*" David had formerly been blessed with the gifts of the spirit—he had recently sinned grievously; he had reason to fear that the tokens of divine favor would be withdrawn, and he felt the need of divine support. It was therefore very proper that he should pray in this manner.

There are some predictions in the Old Testament relating to the Messiah, in which the spirit of God is mentioned, that deserve particular attention.

Isa. xi. 1. 2. "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: and the *spirit of the Lord* shall rest upon him, the *spirit of wisdom* and *understanding*, the *spirit* of *council* and *might*, the *spirit of knowledge* and of the *fear of the Lord.*"

Ch. xlii. 1. "Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth: I have put *my spirit* upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles."

Ch. lxi. 1. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."

That these passages relate to the Messiah will not be doubted. The two last are explicitly applied to him in the New Testament. The last was read by him in the synagogue and appropriated to himself. We may also observe, that the same language is here used, that was used in the passages before quoted, which evidently referred to God's bestowing extraordinary gifts or supernatural powers.

By these passages the Old and New Testament become connected; for what was here predicted was fulfilled after the Messiah made his appearance. It was foretold that the *spirit* of the Lord should *rest on him.* This was fulfilled at his baptism and inauguration; a symbol of which was given in the form of a dove which descended and abode upon him. In giving the account Matthew says, ch. iii. 16. "the spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him." Mark says "the spirit like a dove descending upon him." ch. i. 10. Luke says, the *Holy Ghost* descended. ch. iii. 22. This descent of the spirit was the token given to John, by which he was to know the Messiah. John i. 32, 33, 34. "And John bare record, saying, I saw the spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, upon whom thou shalt see the spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record, that this is the Son of God."

It was at the same time that Jesus received the anointing. Isa. lxi. 1. In reference to this Peter at the house of Cornelius spake thus, "That word ye know which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John

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preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him." Acts x. 37, 38. As he had thus received miraculous powers from the Father, he said to the Jews, "But if I cast out devils by the *spirit* of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." Mat. xii. 28. The same idea is expressed Luke xi. 20, in this manner. "But if I with the *finger* of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you."

Thus far we see a perfect harmony between the Old Testament and the New as to the meaning of "*the spirit of God.*" There is however another propheey, which also connects the two Testaments,

Joel ii. 28, 29. "And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will *pour out my spirit* upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall phopheey; and your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants, and upon the handmaids, in those days, *will I pour out my spirit.*" This text in Joel was quoted by Peter and applied to the effusion of the spirit, on the day of Pentecost.—"This, said he, "is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel." He then cites the passage which is now before us. There is however another circumstance truly remarkable. This very effusion of the spirit on the day of pentecost was not only a fulfilment of the propheey in Joel, but also of our Saviour's promise to his apostles, that he would send them the Comforter, the Holy Ghost. This promise was several times repeated in his discourse to them the evening before the crucifixion. It was renewed after his resurrection. They were commanded to tarry at Jerusalem until they should be "*endued with power from on high;* Luke xxiv. 49.

On the day of his ascension he said to them, "John truly *baptized with water*, but ye shall be *baptized with the Holy Ghost* not many days hence." Acts i. 5. "Ye shall receive *power* after *the Holy Ghost* is come upon you," ver. 8. Accordingly, "when the day of penteeost was fully come, they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance, "Acts ii. 1—4. In his sermon on that occasion, Peter brought to view the crucifixion of Christ, and then said, "This Jesus hath God raised up whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath *shed forth* this which ye now see and hear," Acts ii. 32, 33. "*Shed forth*" what? Not a person, but those miraculous gifts which had been promised under the idea of the comforter, monitor, or advocate.

Thus we see the Old Testament and the New, connected and harmonizing as to the meaning of the phrase "the spirit of God." If such were the meaning of this, and equivalent phrases, as used by Moses and

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other writers of the Old Testament, and such the meaning of the phrases in the passages referring to Christ and his apostles, and all that took place on the day of pentecost; must it not require such evidence as the Bible does *not* contain, to convince a judicious and unprejudiced mind, that the spirit of God is a distinct person from the Father? Who that is without prejudice would so much as dream, that by the "*breath* of God" is intended a person? Yet it is certain, that by the *breath* of God and the *spirit* of God are intended the same thing.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, &c.

Continued from page 174.

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Matthew iii. 7. "Many of the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees* came to his baptism."

THERE is so frequent reference in the New Testament to these two great sects among the Jews, that the peculiarities of sentiment and of character in each should be well understood, to discern the propriety, and to feel the force of many allusions to, and of many direct expressions concerning them. We will endeavour to convey as clear, and as full a general knowledge of them, as we can within the limits which must be assigned to this article.

The name *Pharisee* was derived from a Hebrew word, which signified *separated*, or *set apart*. The origin of the sect, and the time of its commencement, are alike obscure; but it was probably formed between two and three hundred years before the christian æra, and gradually grew out of the pride and the hypocrisy of the expounders of the *traditionary law*. The Pharisees were distinguished, 1, by their frequent *washings*, which they made a religious duty; and the omission of which they accounted a capital crime. If a pharisee could obtain only water enough to wash his hands, he would die with thirst, rather than drink it. 2. They made prayers in public places, *at the corners of the streets*, to attract the esteem and veneration of the people. 3. They thought themselves to be defiled, if they touched, or conversed with sinners. 4. They fasted often; but particularly on Mondays and Thursdays, because Moses, they say, went up into the mount on Thursday, and returned on Monday. 5. They were scrupulously exact in payment of their tythes, and even exceeded the requisitions of the law. 6. In the observance of the Sabbath they were so rigorous, as to forbid anyone, on that day to eat ears of corn, or even to heal the sick. 7. They wore broader phylacteries, (pieces of parchment, on which were written passages from Exodus and Deuteronomy, which were bound to their foreheads and arms;) and larger fringes to their garments, than the rest

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of the Jews. 8. They believed, that when Moses was with God in the mount, he received with the written law, another which was *traditionary*, containing the sense and explication of the other;—that Moses repeated this law, first to Aaron and to his sons; and again at his death to Joshua, who delivered it to the elders; and they to the prophets, and the prophets to the wise men of the great synagogue. These traditions, than which nothing could be more trifling in some cases, and more absurd in others, they preferred, to their written law. 9. They believed in predestination, which however they endeavoured to reconcile with the freedom of human actions; and received the doctrines of the existence of angels, and of separate human spirits; of the resurrection, and a future state of rewards and punishments. But they were crafty and insinuating; insolent and implacable; disdaining and trampling upon all but their own party; insupportable in their pride, and insatiable in their avarice. Our Lord accused them of perversions of the Mosaic law, which they made "of none effect by their traditions;" of pride, avarice, cruelty, and hypocrisy. Some, without doubt, of so large a number, were exceptions from these censures. Such, we may believe, were Nicodemus, and Gamalial. But dreadfully corrupt and abandoned must the sect have become, to have occasioned such language as was uttered against them, by our meek, and gentle, and benevolent Redeemer.

We learn from Josephus, how great was the popularity and the power of this sect, about eighty years before the appearance of our Lord. "When king Alexander Janneus lay upon his death bed, and his wife Alexandra was much affected by the condition in which she and her children would be left, on account of the hatred which she knew that the pharisees bore to her husband and family, he advised her by all means to caress them, as the only means of securing the affection of the mass of the nation; for *there were no such friends where they loved, and no such enemies where they hated;* and whether they spake true or false, good or evil of any one, they would be alike believed by the common people. He therefore enjoined it upon her, after his death, to commit his body to their disposal; at the same time to assure them, that she would ever submit herself to their authority and direction. She obeyed him; and not only was his funeral more sumptuous than that of any of his predecessors, but she was firmly established in the supreme government of the nation."

The Sadducees derive their name from Sadoc, the founder of their sect. He was a disciple and the successor of Antigonus Sochæus, who had formed a sect, distinguished by the professed purity and *disinterestedness* of their worship. "Be not like slaves." said he to his pupils; "nor obey your master only for the sake of a reward. But serve him without a hope of reaping the fruits of your la-

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bers." Unable to reach this elevation of virtue, and unwilling to desert his master, Sadoc adopted his principles, but inferred from them, that there was no future state. Sadoc, it is said, lived about 260 years before our Lord.

That the Sadducees disbelieved the existence of angels and of spirits, appears from the account which is given of them in the New Testament. They likewise denied all divine decrees; and asserted, that "man was absolutely master of his own actions, with a full freedom to do either good or evil, as he thought proper; that God did not influence him in doing either; and that his prosperity and adversity, being placed within his own power, are respectively the effect of his own wisdom or folly. "They certainly received the five books of Moses; but how they explained the passages, in which is related the apparition of angels, is not known. At this time there are some, who are so very ingenious, that they can explain every expression and sentence of the New Testament, in perfect consistency with the doctrine, that there is no punishment for the wicked after this life; and one of these very ingenious persons has assured me, that after reading the gospels and epistles with great frequency and attention, he has not been able to find in them the doctrine of a future judgment. I can easily conceive therefore, that there should have been some among the Jews, who received the books of Moses, and yet denied the existence of angels; difficult as it may be to fix upon any interpretation, with which I can believe that any serious inquirers could be satisfied. We are less surprised at their disbelief of the immortality of the soul. It was but intimated in their scriptures: But dark as may appear to us to have been these intimations, all the rest of the Jews, on the ground of their scriptures, received the doctrine. The light of a candle, with which we see clearly in the night, as far as its rays extend, is lost in that brightness which the sun extends over the earth; and we, who live under the gospel, perhaps can hardly judge of the importance of the light of the Old Testament to the Jews, nor of the degree of clearness with which they were enabled by it to see objects, which to us are discovered perfectly by the gospel. It is said, that they rejected the prophets, but there is great reason to doubt it. They assisted in the temple, and at all religious assemblies, where the books of the prophets were read more than any others. They also expected the Messiah, as well as the rest of the Jews, or they would not have gone out to receive the baptism of John; and must therefore, we should think, have received the books which foretold his coming. Their great distinction from the Pharisees in this respect was, that they utterly rejected all *traditions;* and maintained that there was no law, but that which was *written.* Nor is it credible that they should have been advanced to the highest offices in the state,

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and even to the high-priesthood, if they had rejected the greatest part of the Jewish scriptures.

The Sadducees were few in number, compared with the Pharisees; but the admission of men to the highest office in the church, who denied the doctrines of *the providence of God*, and of *the immortality of the soul*, shows the general and deep corruption of the nation. Caiaphas, the high-priest, by whom our Lord was condemned, was of this sect. We do not find in the gospels, that one Sadducee believed in Christ.

The people, very generally, received the tenets, and observed the traditions of the Pharisees; but they were rather an appendage, than a part of the sect; and are always called very plainly, *the people, or the multitude.* The title of pharisee seems to have been almost exclusively appropriated to men of leisure and of fortune. Sometimes we find them united with the Sadducees in the same design against Christ. At other times they attacked him separately, and endeavoured to ensnare him with questions, which grew out of their peculiar and distinguishing sentiments. But there was a remarkable difference in the conduct of our Lord towards these two great parties. Of the Sadducees he said only, that they *erred, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God;* but the Pharisees he treated with the utmost severity, heaping upon them the most dreadful denunciations for their *hypocrisy.* In accounting for this different treatment of our Saviour, it is remarked, 1, that the Sadducees were exact observers of the law; whereas the Pharisees adulterated it by their traditions, adding to it the most impious sentiments, which they concealed under a specious pretence of religion. 2. That there is this difference between error and vice; the first is only in the understanding, and often involuntary; whereas the last is in the will, and proceeds from a corrupt state of the heart. 3. Of all vices, none are of a more pernicious consequence, nor with more difficulty eradicated, than were those of the pharisees, *spiritual pride*, and *hypocrisy.* What a lesson, what a warning does this peculiarity in the conduct of our Lord, preach to all who call themselves his disciples! Let him who would denounce his brother, because he sees in his eye the mote of error, first ascertain, whether the beam of spiritual pride be not in his own; and as he would escape the woes which are pronounced upon *hypocrites*, remember always, that, as God cannot be deceived, so he will not be mocked.

Some curious extracts from the Talmuds concerning these sects may be seen in Lightfoot upon the verse. See also Lewis' Orig. Heb ver. 1 and 2. pp. 224 and 241. Jennings' Jewish Antiq. v. 1. p. 437, and 455. Lardner, v. 1. p. 118. L'Enfant and Beausobre, 185—190. Calmet's Antiq. B. 3. Diss. 13. Sect. 2.

A friendly attempt to correct a common error.

Such is our confidence in the interesting writer of the foregoing "Illustrations," that it is believed he will be gratified if we

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avail ourselves of the opportunity he has given, to correct a very common mistake; especially so, if the correction shall exhibit the character of our Saviour in a more amiable light, and remove from his example all pretext for the too common practice of "*denunciation.*" In the last paragraph of the preceding article it is said of our Lord—"He treated the Pharisees with the utmost severity, heaping upon them the most dreadful denunciations for their hypocrisy." However perfectly this observation may express the commonly received opinion, it is seriously doubted whether it gives a correct view of our Saviour's feelings, or of his conduct towards the hypocritical pharisees.

Dr. Campbell has a most interesting note on Luke vi. 24, 25, 26, in which he explains the phrase, translated "*woe unto you,*" &c. The note is too long to be now inserted; we shall however quote a few sentences. The Dr. says, "Our Lord is not here acting in the character of a judge, pronouncing sentence on the guilty, or dooming them to punishment." "*Woe is unto you,* not *woe be unto you,*" he contends is the meaning of the phrase. He remarks on the text, "Woe to the women with child and to them that give suck in those days," and then says, "If we recur to the Old Testament, we have the clearest proofs that the word in Hebrew," answering to *woe,* "is commonly employed to express not wrath and execration, but the deepest concern and lamentation." Of our Lord, the Doctor says, "he came not to *curse* but to *bless* us, by turning away every one from his iniquities. The words which proceeded from his mouth were in every sense justly denominated full of *grace and truth.* His example was perfectly conformable to his instructions; and I will venture to affirm, that the more narrowly we examine his discourses, the more we shall be convinced that nothing he ever uttered against any living being, if candidly interpreted, will be found to have the least affinity to an imprecation."

We may add; it is one thing affectionately and solemnly to warn, and quite another thing to imprecate, anathematize, or denounce. For the first of these, ministers have the example of Christ, which they may safely follow; for the other it is believed they have *not* his example, and if they had, it would be unsafe to imitate it, unless like him they were divinely commissioned and inspired. The language of Christ, as explained by Dr. Campbell, denotes "pity and grief" in view of awful guilt and danger, "not anger and resentment." This perfectly harmonizes with the heavenly tenderness for which our Saviour was so remarkable; in the exercise of which he laid down his life for sinners, and prayed for those who insulted him in his distress, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." If any thing be important, it is important that ministers of the gospel should display the compassionate temper of the Saviour of the world, and give up all apprehension that they may be justified by his example, in "heaping the most dreadful denuncia-

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tions" on those who oppose them. Instead of this carnal and antichristian warfare, let them in meekness instruct, and in compassion warn, those who may oppose themselves, if God peradventure shall give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth. In this way they may "overcome evil with good."

MODERN MONUMENTS AT JERUSALEM.

The following accounts are abridged from Chateaubriand's "Travels in Greece, Palestine, Egypt, and Barbary, during the years 1806 and 1807." We see no occasion to question the learning or the veracity of this writer. In some instances, however, the discerning protestant will find occasion to make some allowance for the credulity of an author attached to the catholic faith.

In ancient times, Mount Calvary was without the city; it was the place where criminals, sentenced to suffer death, were executed; and that all the people might attend on these occasions, there was a large vacant space between the eminence and the wall of the city. The rest of the hill was surrounded with gardens, one of which belonged to Joseph of Arimathea, who was, in secret, a disciple of Jesus Christ; here he had constructed a sepulchre for himself, and in this the body of our Lord was deposited.

The church of the Holy Sepulchre is very irregular, owing to the nature and situation of the places which it was designed to comprehend. It is nearly in the form of a cross, being 120 paces in length, exclusive of the descent to the discovery of the Holy Cross, and seventy in breadth. It has three domes, of which that covering the Holy Sepulchre, serves for the nave of the church. This church had formerly three entrances, but now there is but one door, the keys of which are cautiously kept by the Turks, lest the pilgrims should gain admittance without paying the nine sequens, demanded for this indulgence. This door is always shut; and there is only a small window crossed with an iron bar, through which the people without, hand provisions to those within, who are of eight different nations.

The *first* is that of the Latins or Romans, which is represented by the Franciscan friars. They are the keepers of the Holy Sepulchre, the place on Mount Calvary, where our Lord was nailed to the cross, the spot where the sacred cross was discovered, the stone of unction, and the chapel where our Lord appeared to the blessed virgin after his resurrection. The second is that of the Greeks, who have the chair of the church where they officiate. The third is the nation of the Abyssinians. The fourth is that of the Copts, who are Egyptian christians. The fifth is the Armenian. The sixth is that of the Nestorians, or Jacobites, who are natives of Chaldea and of Syria. The seventh is the nation of the Georgians, who inhabit the coun-

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try between the Euxine and the Caspian sea. The eighth is that of the Maronites, who inhabit Mount Lebanon.

On entering the church, you come to the stone of unction, on which the body of our Lord was anointed with myrrh and aloes, before it was laid in the sepulchre.

The holy sepulchre is thirty paces from this stone: it resembles a small closet, hewn out of the solid rock. The entrance, which faces the east, is only four feet high, and two feet and a quarter broad, so that you are obliged to stoop very much to go in. The interior of the sepulchre is nearly square. There is a solid block of the same stone, which was left in excavating the other part. On this table the body of our Lord was laid, with his head towards the west. Forty four lamps are constantly burning in this sacred place.

At the entrance of the sepulchre, there is a stone about a foot and a half square, and a foot thick, which is of the same rock, and served to support the large stone which closed the access to the sepulchre. Upon this stone was seated the angel when he spoke to the two Maries; and as well on account of this mystery as to prevent the sepulchre from being entered, the first christians erected before it a little chapel, which is called the Angel's Chapel. Twelve paces from the holy sepulchre, turning towards the north, you come to a large block of marble, about four feet in diameter, placed there to mark the spot where our Lord appeared to Mary Magdalen in the form of a gardener.

Farther on is the chapel of the apparition, where, as tradition asserts, our Lord first appeared to the Virgin Mary, after his resurrection.

Continuing your progress round the church, you find a small vaulted chapel, otherwise denominated the prison of our Lord, because he was here confined, while the hole was made for erecting the cross.

Very near this is another chapel, standing on the very spot where our Lord was stripped by the soldiers before he was nailed to the cross, and where they cast lots for his apparel, and divided it among them.

Leaving this chapel, you find on the left a great staircase, which pierces the wall of the church, and descends into a kind of cellar dug out of the rock. Having gone down thirty steps, you come to a chapel on the left hand, which is commonly called the Chapel of St. Helena, because she prayed there while she caused search to be made for the sacred cross. You descend eleven more steps to the place where it was discovered, together with the nails, the crown of thorns, and the head of the spear, after lying buried in this place upwards of 300 years.

Near the top of this staircase, turning towards Mount Calvary is a chapel, under the altar of which is a pillar of gray marble spotted with black. It is called the pillar of *Impropere*, because our Lord was there forced to sit down in order to be crowned with thorns.

(To be continued.)

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REVIEW.

Sermons to mariners, by Abiel Abbot, A. M. Pastor of the first church in Beverly. Boston, published by S. T. Armstrong, Cornhill.

It must afford delight to real christians of every sect, to see the efforts which are made in the present age, both in Great Britain and this country, to extend the means and the blessings of religion to every class of people. Among the various classes in this country, there is perhaps no one which has higher claims on the sympathy, the prayers, and the concern of a religious community, than that of mariners. No souls are more precious than those of seafaring men; and none perhaps whose everlasting welfare has been more neglected, both by themselves and others.

It is not our intention to fill many pages of the Christian Disciple with reviews of books which may be published in this country; but when a work appears of a character so unexceptionable and benevolent, as the one now before us, we shall not deny ourselves the pleasure of attempting to aid a kind design, by recommending the work to the notice of others.

The volume contains fourteen sermons, and an equal number of forms of prayer for the use of seamen. The titles of the sermons and the texts are the following: "The works and wonders of God in the deep, observed and improved," Psalms cvii. 23, 24. "Fleshly lusts defined, and shown to be inexcusable." 1 Peter, ii. 11. "An affectionate dissuasive from destructive lusts." Same text. "The guilt of profane cursing and swearing." Levit. xxiv. 13, 14. "Holy resolution." Job xxxiv. 31, 32. "The intercession of Christ, two sermons," from 1 John ii. 1. "The danger of delay in religion." Acts xxiv. 25. "Salvation ascribed to God." Jonah ii. 9. "The keenest afflictions often the greatest mercies." Gen. xlii. 36. "The incomparable treasure." Matthew xvi. 26. "The care of the soul the supreme concern." Same text. "The general resurrection and final retribution." John v. 28, 29.

In the preface we are informed, that the sermons were chiefly "addressed by the author to the seamen of his own parish, in annual discourses, on the first sabbath in March, according to the immemorial custom of the place." This custom we cannot but approve. It naturally brings together at the place of worship, many persons who would not attend on ordinary occasions; and when a large number of a parish are about to leave their families, to expose themselves to the perils of the ocean, an affectionate pastor may avail himself of the circumstances, and make favorable impressions on all who are present. And discourses delivered under such affecting circumstances, if printed, will be likely to be read with interest and advantage. Those now before us, we think, may be read with profit, not only by mariners, but by every class of people. They appear to be free from that

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acrimony, bitterness, and party spirit, which disgraces too many of the sermons of the present age. While mariners are faithfully admonished of the vices and dangers to which they are exposed, virtue and religion are fervently recommended, and the tenderness, sympathy, and concern of the christian pastor are happily exemplified. Should captains and masters of vessels become more generally disposed to spend the sabbath in the exercises of religion, this volume will be of great use on such occasions, as well as for more private reading.

As a specimen of the author's style, we may quote a paragraph from the sermon on "the guilt of profane cursing and swearing."

"This impious practice tends to seduce the swearer into general vice and irreligion. *The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom;* the man therefore, who is disengaged from this fear, is without the grand principle of religion; and has no considerable restraint left on his lusts and passions. Now it is difficult to think of any thing more adapted to extinguish that fear of God, than the habit of irreverently using his name. The *man* whom you can insult to his face, you cease to fear. The same remark is just in regard to *God*. From whatever causes or accidents it has grown, when once you have the habit of insulting your Maker, and of prostituting "with unhallowed breath" his dread name on vile occasions, it is not the fear of God which any longer restrains you from the worst vices and the most dreadful deeds."

We were much gratified with the forms of prayer for the use of seamen. It is our most fervent wish, that forms of prayer may be multiplied in our land; and that a greater number may be published, adapted to family worship, and the use of schools. It is believed to be a matter for just and deep regret, that such strong prejudices exist in society against the use of forms. How many, who now wholly neglect family worship, would gladly and regularly perform the duty, had they suitable forms, and were they free from the influence of unreasonable prejudices against the use of them! We do not recommend the use of forms to those who need them not; but we sincerely wish, that every minister and every christian would use his influence to encourage those to make use of forms, who are deficient in gifts or in confidence for extempore prayer. How many children grow up from infancy to adult age without even hearing the name of God used in prayer by their parents; and without knowing that their parents consider prayer as a duty for any but ministers of the gospel! What favorable impressions would probably be made on the minds of children by daily hearing or reading suitable forms of prayer! We devoutly and fervently hope, that in addition to all that has been done for promoting christian knowledge, a serious and well conducted effort will be made to revive family religion, by circulating books adapted to that purpose, and by exertions to eradicate all the unhappy pre-

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possessions against the use of forms.

Let the subject be taken up in the various associations of ministers, and the societies formed for the advancement of religion, and let it be pursued with an ardor proportionate to its importance, and will not something be done, in view of which the whole family in heaven and earth will rejoice?

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

THE CONVERSION OF LEARNED JEWS, &c.

All remarkable events relating to the Jews must be interesting to the christian world. While we cordially pray for their conversion to the christian faith, it must be comforting to find evidence, that God hath not wholly *cast away his people*. The following accounts were extracted and abridged from "The History of the Jews," by Miss Hannah Adams. By this work the writer has secured the esteem of many of her fellow christians. It cannot fail to interest every benevolent reader.

Poland has long been the principal seat of literary Jews, and the place where they have been accustomed to send their children to study the Talmud and rites of their religion. In 1658 a Jew of Poland, named John Solomon, professed the christian faith, and wrote thirty seven demonstrations to prove that the Messiah was come, and was a divine person, distinct from God the Father.

Several learned Jews in Poland and Germany have at different periods been converted to christianity. Mordecai-Ben-Moses, a native of Germany, had distinguished himself by his zeal in writing against the New Testament. But after diligently studying, and carefully comparing it with the Old, he became sensible of his error, renounced Judaism, and in 1701 was baptized. After his conversion he published several valuable works.

Aaron Morgalitha, a learned Rabbi in Poland, embraced the christian religion and was baptized. He was afterwards appointed professor of Jewish Antiquities in the University of Frankfort, where he published, in 1706, a treatise on the sufferings of Christ.

J. C. Heilbronner of Cracow in Poland was baptized in 1709. He wrote a treatise on the 53d of Isaiah, and declared in the preface to the work, that this chapter was the principal means of inducing him to embrace the christian religion.

E. M. Borg was also convinced of the truth of christianity by reading the same chapter. In 1722 he published an extraordinary work with this title—"The christian doctrine built upon Moses and the Prophets." Another learned Jew, named Christian Meir, was baptized at Breme.

About the year 1762 Solomon Dutch, a learned Rabbi, and teacher of several synagogues in Germany, renounced Judaism. During seven years his mind had been perplexed with doubts respecting religion; but at length the difficulties which had embarrassed him were removed. He published a narrative of his conversion, and became a zealous preacher of the gospel. He lived and died in Holland.

In 1797, J. J. Heydeck, a learned Jewish convert in Spain, published a defence of the christian religion.

Mr. Lapidoth, a respectable Jew in Holland, in early life entertained doubts respecting the Jewish religion; and having secretly procured a New-Testament, and continued his researches, after various perplexities, he and his wife and his adult children became firmly convinced of the truth of the christian religion.

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Joseph S. C. F. Frey, was born in 1771 in Franconia. His father placed him under the care of a tutor, by whom he was carefully instructed in the law and Talmud, and inspired with prejudice and hatred against christianity. Having finished the studies which qualified him for a religious teacher, he received several honorary degrees. At the age of twenty one, he resolved to travel. In the course of his travels he became disgusted with the fraudulent conduct of one of his Hebrew brethren, and formed an acquaintance with a christian, whose conversation and kind behaviour induced him to examine the evidences of the christian religion. In consequence of his inquiries he was convinced, that Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah; and in 1798 was publicly baptized in Germany, and received as a member of the christian church. Having attended to the requisite studies, he was appointed as a missionary to Africa. In 1801 he arrived in England, and was detained five months. During this time, he attended to the study of the English language; he went frequently to the synagogues and to the parts of the metropolis where the Jews reside, to converse with them. These interviews increased his desire for the conversion of his brethren, and he wished to remain in England, that he might preach to them. He stated his desire to the Directors of the Missionary Society, and obtained leave to tarry at least one year. In May 1802 he preached his first sermon to the Jews in Zion Chapel, from Gen. xiii. 8. The place, although very large, was crowded, and many Jews attended. In July he began a weekly lecture to the Jews. At first many attended, but this was soon prohibited. Some however continued to be attentive hearers, and three of the nation were publicly baptized in London 1806.

In 1809 Mr. Frey joined a society, formed in London for the exclusive purpose of converting the Jews. A large building was procured, where he preaches a lecture every sunday evening, and two others in the course of the week. From two to five hundred Jews attend, among whom are a number who profess a conviction of the truth of christianity. The London society have established a charity school for Jewish children; and a free school which is not confined to the Jews, though with a principal regard to the benefit of that nation. From three to four hundred children have been regularly educated at this school.

One of the principal Jews in the kingdom has lately been baptized, and made vice president of the society. A Rabbi also, who is a native of Jerusalem and acknowledged by the learned as a prodigy in literature, has embraced the christian religion, and is receiving instruction, in hope of his preaching the gospel to his Hebrew brethren in his native country.

When men of such eminence among the Jews are converted, the prospects are truly flattering, that many others will be influenced by their examples and instructions. The present Jewish population in the world is estimated at three millions; one million in the Turkish empire; three hundred thousand in Persia, China, India, and Tartary—and one million seven hundred thousand in the rest of Europe, Africa, and America.

Considering the dispersions and sufferings of the Jews, their preservation as a distinct people is an event, which has no parallel in history. These extracts will be concluded by introducing a passage from M. Michael Berr's appeal to the justice of kings and nations. The writer is a modern Jew. His appeal was published at Stratsburg in 1801. The passage to be quoted relates to the miraculous preservation of the Jews: his language is animated and impressive.*

* When the above article was prepared for the Christian Disciple, it was not known that an individual youth had renounced the christian religion, under the influence of Jewish objections and arguments. It is possible that among these Rabbies, there were some who had examined the subject in question with as much learning, patience, uprightness, and strength of mind, as the

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"Braving all kinds of torments, the pangs of death, the still more terrible pangs of life, we alone have withstood the impetuous torrent of time, sweeping indiscriminately in its course nations, religions, and countries. What is become of those celebrated empires, whose very name still excites our admiration by the ideas of splendid greatness attached to them, and whose power embraced the whole surface of the globe? They are only remembered as monuments of the vanity of human greatness. Rome and Greece are no more; their descendants, mixed with other nations, have lost even the traces of their origin; while a population of a few millions of men, so often subjugated, stands the test of thirty revolving centuries, and the fiery ordeal of fifteen centuries of persecution. We still preserve laws which were given to us in the first days of the world, in the infancy of nature. The last followers of a religion which had embraced the universe, have disappeared these fifteen centuries, and our temples are still standing. We alone have been spared by the indiscriminating hand of time, like a column left standing amidst the wreck of worlds, and the ruins of nature. The history of this people connects present times with the first ages of the world, by the testimony it bears of the existence of those early periods. It begins at the cradle of mankind, and its remnants are likely to be preserved to the very day of universal destruction."

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

THE ninth annual meeting of this society took place May 5th, 1813. A more interesting scene has perhaps seldom been witnessed in the religious world, since the memorable day of penticost. Lord Teignmouth, who was formerly Governor General of Bengal, was called to the chair; on each side of him sat a duke of the royal family, who took an active part, and appeared deeply interested in the object of the institution. The report of the committee contained an account of the mission of Mr. Steinkoff to the continent, and of the formation of 73 societies since the last annual meeting. The duke of Kent expressed his decided approbation of the principle, which had been adopted, of distributing the Bible without *note* or *comment*, and said, "without this fundamental principle, he should not have joined the society; and that the good understanding it promoted, and the union which it formed of churchmen, catholics, dissenters, and baptists, gave him the highest pleasure and satisfaction." The duke of Sussex, another son of the king, fully agreed with his royal brother. He said "they had indeed entered upon a noble warfare, they had pursued the most godlike career; it consisted in the proposals of peace and good will to every man, whether enemy or friend. Often, he said, he felt the duty as well as the inclination, to unite in the cause of benevolence; but now he felt

young man who has endeavoured to remove the only satisfactory ground of hope to the penitent sinner. If, then, we set aside, as of no account, all the learning, the talents, and the integrity of the many millions of believers who have been educated under the influence of christianity, we may place the whole number of converted Rabbies in one scale, and the adventurous youth in the other. This being done, we shall refer it to common christians to determine for themselves, in which scale there is the greatest weight of probability. That these learned Jews began to examine the subject with strong attachments to the Jewish religion, and strong prejudices against christianity can hardly be doubted. Whether the attachments of the young man to christianity, and his aversion to infidelity had been equally strong, is a serious question. If they had not, this difference naturally falls into the scale in favor of the Rabbies.

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peculiar and superior emotions; he felt proud and grateful for the honors of the day; he never felt satisfaction equal to that arising from his attendance on the present meeting. The extraordinary success of the institution appeared to be the work of providence; it could not be accounted for by mere human assistance. They might now consider his attendance as a brotherly act, and the result of mature and sober reflexion."

All party spirit seems to have been banished from the scene by the prevalence of mutual love, and a sense of the infinite importance of the great object, the general diffusion of the divine and unadulterated truths of of christianity. The names, by which the several sects of christians are distinguished, seem to have been brought to view on that occasion for no other purpose, than that persons of one sect might express their cordial regard for those of another. If we may confide in the accounts which have been given of the meeting, we may apply the language of the sacred historian with some qualifications—"The multitude of them that believed were of ONE HEART and ONE SOUL: neither said any of them, that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common; and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and GREAT GRACE WAS UPON THEM ALL."

BIBLE SOCIETY OF NASSAU HALL.

THE Directors of this society have recently resolved "to make the navy of the United States a particular object in the distribution of Bibles." They have accordingly transmitted seventy-five Bibles to be distributed among the sailors under the command of Commodore Decatur, at New-London. General Huntington was employed as the agent to deliver the present. We shall give the Commodore's letter of thanks.

"*U. S. S. United States, July* 22, 1813.
"Dear Sir,

"I have this moment received your letter, containing the resolution of the Board of Directors of the Bible Society of Nassau Hall. You will have the goodness to express to them the grateful sense I, in common with the officers of the navy, entertain of their having made the navy of the United States a particular object in the distribution of their Bibles; my thanks for the liberal supply which they have proposed for the squadron under my command, and to assure them of my most cordial cooperation in effectuating their highly laudable design. The light, in which the Board have considered me personally, is the more flattering from the opinion I entertain of its source, and you will oblige me by making to them my warmest acknowledgments of their condescention and goodness. I am, &c.

"STEPHEN DECATUR."

The above account we regard as the harbinger of still greater good. The example of this society will probably be followed by others, and the example of the Commodore we hope will have a salutary influence, both on the officers and seamen of our navy. While we sincerely deplore the necessity of a navy, we as sincerely wish that efforts may be made, to supply all our fellow citizens, thus employed, with the best means for religious improvement. In addition to the Bible we would cordially recommend Mr. Abbot's sermons to mariners, to the notice of our navy officers, and to the notice of those societies who may wish to furnish seafaring men with the means of religion.

THE SPANISH INQUISITION ABOLISHED.

THIS important event has been recently announced. In our next number we intend to give some account of the tribunal, and some remarks on the protest against its abolition.

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The report of the Trustees to the Evangelical Missionary Society, at their annual meeting, holden at Westborough, Oct. 6, 1818.

With gratitude to the Supreme Dispenser of blessings the Trustees rejoice to inform the society of the success attending the measures they have used to "spread the savour of the knowledge of Christ." Experiment confirms them in a belief of the utility of the principle, upon which they have practised. They have still a full persuasion, that by bestowing their charitable aid upon particular churches and societies, they may more effectually advance their brethren in social and christian life, than by allowing their missionaries to traverse an unlimited extent of territory.

Since the last anniversary the most favorable accounts have been received of the fidelity, usefulness, and acceptance of the Rev. Peter Nurse, and Rev. Silas Warren. Towards the support of each of these ministers the trustees have appropriated one hundred dollars. With the charitable contributions afforded from another missionary society, the people to whom they minister are enabled to render them a comfortable support. The members of the Evangelical Missionary Society cannot "be weary in these ways of well doing," when they learn, that under the ministry of these faithful servants, the social and moral state of some of their suffering fellow christians is much improved, the spirit of sectarianism abated, and a laudable attention to religious duties and institutions awakened. It must also be a strong motive to the continuance of charity, when informed that in the present season of distressing calamity, was this aid withdrawn, the people in the settlements where they are established must fail of having regularly dispensed to them "the bread of life."

One hundred dollars has also been applied to the support of the Rev. Jonathan Keith, as missionary in the town of Dixmont, in the District of Maine. Of the purity of his character, the board had received ample testimonials. A leading inhabitant of that town has embraced the earliest opportunity to convey information of the acceptableness of Mr. Keith's services, and to express the gratitude of the inhabitants for this instance of generous concern for their spiritual welfare.

The Trustees have now on hand for distribution, two hundred copies of the Worcester catechism; two hundred of the Address of the Trustees; and eighty four of "Doddridge's rise and progress of religion in the soul."

As appears from the Treasurer's account he has received $1363 95.

After a deduction of the monies paid in the course of the year for missionary labours, there remain in the treasury $1176 79.

The Trustees, in consideration of the calamitous times on which we have fallen, and fearing, should they continue, annual contributions will fail, have instructed the Treasurer to put one thousand dollars at interest with good security, that it may be for an accumulating fund. By this arrangement they hope that the society in a season of the most pressing necessity will be enabled to continue their useful labors.

In conclusion, the Trustees invite the attention of a christian community to the object of their institution. They beseech those, who are favored with the regular dispensation of the word and ordinances to express their sympathy for their brethren, who are suffering for lack of knowledge. They assure all the benevolent, that their charity shall be faithfully applied to the education of children and youth, to the founding of churches, and to the support of regular ministers, who "shall contend earnestly for the faith, which was once delivered to the saints." They indulge the hope, and unite with the members of the society in the devout prayer, that this Association may be successful in its humble endeavours to arrest the triumphs of error, to promote "pure and undefiled religion," and especially to enkindle that "charity, which is the bond of perfectness."

ELIJAH BRIGHAM, *President.*

Accepted. Attest, NATHANIEL THAYER, *Rec. & Cor. Sec'y.*

[An additional note to the above report will be inserted in the next number.]

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Love to enemies.

From a report of the Directors to the London Missionary Society it appears, that among other benevolent exertions, they have employed ministers to preach the gospel to the French prisoners, and established among them little libraries of useful books.

Obituary.

Died at Boston, Sept: 29, 1813, Charles Eliot, son of Samuel Eliot, Esq. The following account of the deceased is taken from the Columbian Centinel, for Oct. 2, 1813.

"The death of Mr. Eliot, who was yesterday interred, is an event of uncommon distress. It has blighted many fair hopes, and dissolved many affectionate attachments. It has removed from the family circle an object of peculiar interest and congratulation; from society a rising and valuable member; from the University an accomplished son, and has deprived the church of one who promised to serve and adorn it. Mr. Eliot was graduated at Cambridge in 1809, and continued there as a resident graduate, pursuing the study of divinity. On taking his Master's degree in 1812, he pronounced the valedictory oration of his class. His diligence in pursuit of his studies was exemplary, if not excessive; there is too much reason to fear, that the disease which terminated his life, was contracted by severe application. Having acquainted himself extensively with the scriptures, with sacred criticism, and with the other parts of sacred learning, and disciplined his mind and heart by faithful preparation, he was approbated in January last, by the Boston association, as a candidate for the christian ministry. The few sermons he preached, before he was arrested by the symptoms of disease, were distinguished for soundness of doctrine, for rational views of religion, for richness of thought, and great propriety and chasteness of expression. He preached however but a few sabbaths, before his health began to fail, which continued to decline, notwithstanding the most skilful and prudent attentions. By a remarkable coincidence he preached in the pulpit of the late Dr. Eliot, a part of the last sabbath which that lamented divine spent in the house of God; and now he is called to follow his venerable kinsman, as we humbly trust, to higher and purer services. In the course of a long and gradual decay, he found his support in that religion, to which he had consecrated his life. He was upholden by it in those trying hours, and they were not a few, which passed after the hope of his recovery was lost. It is no common share of faith and piety which will sustain the heart in that period of anticipation, when the world around us has lost its interest, and we are beyond the reach of human aid. Through this solitude of the soul, Mr. Eliot displayed a christian composure and collection of spirits, and found in the promises of religion the support, which time and sense could no longer afford. Many hearts have followed him to his long home, and many will affectionately cherish his memory."

In our next we hope to insert an extract from a sermon, occasion by the death of Mr. Eliot.

Candidates for the ministry in Cambridge and its vicinity.

Rev. Mr. Leonard, Boston.	Mr. Thomas B. Gannett, Cambridge.
Mr. William Popkin, Malden.	Mr. Timothy Hilliard, do.
Mr. Samuel Sewall, Cambridge.	Mr. Nathaniel Whitman, do.
Mr. John White, do.	Mr. Lemuel Capen, do.
Mr. Francis Parkman, Boston.	Mr. Joseph Haven, do.
Mr. Joseph Field, do.	Mr. Edward Everett, do

☞ For the Publishers' Notice see the third page of the cover.

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THE

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE.

No. 8. *DECEMBER*, 1813. VOL. I.

OCCASIONAL REFLECTIONS AND REMARKS.

As this month will close the year 1813, and the first volume of the Christian Disciple, some occasional reflections and remarks may naturally be expected.

In the course of the year which is about to end, there have been remarkable indications of divine anger against the nations of christendom. What nation, which has borne the christian name, has not this year felt the calamities of war? In addition to the ordinary course of mortality, how many hundreds of thousands, who were alive at the commencement of the year, have been hurried into eternity, by wars, which have resulted from human pride! How many millions of our fellow creatures have been reduced to want and wretchedness! What numbers have been subjected to months of excruciating pain, by wounds, received in the field of battle? What multitudes have been called to mourn the loss of husbands, or of parents, or of children, or of other dear friends and relatives! Wherefore this flood of wrath on christian nations? Is there not a procuring cause?

Every one, who impartially examines the gospel of the blessed God, must be sensible, that this horrid carnage is not to be imputed to the nature of the christian religion. Had the precepts of the gospel been duly regarded, and the temper required duly cultivated, these scenes of blood and devastation would have been unknown in the christian world. All the horrors and miseries of war have resulted from flagrant violations of the principles and precepts of the christian religion. Earth and heaven would be equally free from wars and fightings, were christian love universally to govern in the hearts of men. But if nations, that are blessed with the gospel, prove ungrateful for the favor, trample on its precepts, and despise its blessings, they offend the God of grace, and bring upon themselves the tokens of his righteous displeasure.

As our nation has felt in some degree the awful scourge of God, what can be more proper, than that we should penitently reflect on the returns we have made to the Father of lights for the blessings, by which we were long distinguished from most other nations of the earth? By what we have already felt of the calam-

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ities of war, we have been solemnly warned; and unless we repent, we may reasonably expect to share the fate of ungrateful nations.

To cultivate the mild and benevolent temper of the gospel, to extirpate groundless prepossessions, to allay the spirit of animosity, and to excite christians, of every sect, to unite their efforts in behalf of the common interest of our Saviour's kingdom, has been a principal object in conducting the Christian Disciple. Whether the means used have, in all instances, been adapted to an end so important, may perhaps be justly questioned; for we have no claim to infallibility. That the universal prevalence of the christian temper would be productive of universal peace and tranquillity, we firmly believe. But it appears to us impossible, that the benefits of the christian religion should be extensively felt in society, so long as the several sects of christians treat each other as enemies. And whether the bitter spirit, which professed christians have indulged one towards another, is not to be placed in the front rank among the abominations which have drawn down the anger of Jehovah on the nations of christendom, is a question, which deserves the serious consideration of all who profess to be followers of the Prince of Peace. What in its nature can be more offensive to God, than such a hostile spirit among his professed friends? And what could tend more to bring the religion of Jesus into contempt, and to subvert the natural influence of the gospel? Let the humble, peaceful, and benevolent spirit of the Saviour of men be considered as the grand criterion of the christian character; or let love one to another become again the distinguishing badge of christian disciples; then religion will appear in its native simplicity, and its influence will be felt as a blessing in society.

Party spirit is ever injurious to the peace of society; but in no connexion is it more injurious, than when employed about the things of religion. When thus employed, it not only tends to bring religion itself into disrepute, but to eradicate its benign influence from the hearts of men, and to convert the richest gifts of heaven into means of discord and mischief.

Whether our declaration will be now credited, or not, it is a fact, that we have no wish to establish a new sect, nor to attach ourselves to any existing sect or party, in hostility to any other. We have no belief, that any existing sect is free from error, either in sentiment or practice; nor do we claim that perfection for ourselves, which we deny to others. If our work may be a means of eradicating party spirit, breaking down party distinctions, promoting a humble and candid spirit of inquiry, and of disposing the real friends of Christ to treat each other according to the laws of brotherly love; this will afford us more satisfaction than we could derive from being the instruments of building up any one party by the ruin of another. It is our opin-

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ion, that true religion is not confined to any one sect or party of christians; and that scarcely any thing is a greater evidence of the want of it, than such an exclusive claim. If we trace the history of the church in past ages, we shall find, that exclusive claims have generally been set up in favor of something, as *essential* to religion, which was never implied in any requirement of God. But we have no conception of any thing, which deserves the name of pure and undefiled religion, but what is implied in *obedience* to the divine commands. As exclusive claims have generally been set up in support of something which God has not required us either to *believe*, or to *do;* so these claims have generally been accompanied with a haughty, overbearing, and hostile spirit, entirely foreign from that love, which is long suffering and kind, and seeketh not her own.

It has been suggested to us, that some have been prepossessed against the work, from an apprehension that we have a *concealed object*, which will hereafter appear. But if this work shall ever degenerate into a party vehicle, in favor of any *sect* or any *person*, it will be perverted from the original and the present design of its conductors. The cultivation of a christian temper may be considered as the primary object of the work. But in pursuing this object, it will behove us to remark on such things, as shall appear to us inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel; and in a candid, respectful manner, to give light on those questions which are the occasion of bitterness and alienation. If we remark on doctrines which appear to us incorrect, it will not be with a view to excite prejudice against those who embrace them, nor to wound their feelings; but to open the way for greater unanimity in sentiment, or at least greater charity and christian forbearance.

Such was the state of society, and such the circumstances under which this work commenced, that it was natural to expect it would have to encounter strong prepossessions, and many unfounded jealousies; and that its progress would be slow, with whatever wisdom and prudence it should be conducted. But we have occasion gratefully to acknowledge, that the progress of the work has been much greater, and the opposition to it much less, than we anticipated. A disappointment so agreeable we feel disposed to ascribe to the goodness of that God, who worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will. At the same time we acknowledge the kindness of the many worthy friends and patrons of the work, and earnestly solicit a continuance of their patronage and exertions.

Many, we believe, from misapprehension, conscientiously forbear to encourage the work. Towards such, we feel disposed to exercise a tender and compassionate regard. Unless we are self deceived, if our bosoms were so transparent, that our feelings and motives could be visible to all, the objections of many pious

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christians would instantly vanish; for they would see, that our main object is in correspondence with the angelic song, "GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, PEACE ON EARTH, AND GOOD WILL TO MEN."

As the present year is near to an end, it may be proper for all who have been concerned, as conductors or readers of this work, seriously to reflect on the long suffering of God. Having obtained help of God, we continue to this day, although millions of our fellow creatures, in the course of the year, have been called by death. Let each one faithfully press these questions on his own conscience: What returns have I made to the Preserver of men, for his distinguishing mercy? Have my time and talents been employed in his service? Have I rendered according to the benefits I have received? What would have been my condition, had I been taken and others left? What would be my future state, should I be called in the present situation of my heart and character? Could an impartial Judge say to me, "Well done! good and faithful servant?" Have I learned of him, who was meek and lowly of heart? Have I obeyed his commands, and conformed my heart and life to his example? What will be my duty, should preserving mercy still prolong my life? Can I do less than to live to him, who lived and died for me?

"Surely there is an end." The close of the year should remind us of our advances towards the close of life, and to that solemn period when the current of time shall have carried us all into the ocean of eternity. How rapidly do our days, our months, our years, pass away! What awful ravages are made by death, in the course of every year! Shall we be continually advancing towards the tribunal of our Judge, and still live regardless of the solemn account to be given, and of all the admonitions we receive on our way to the judgment seat?

Of how little avail in the great day will be the party names, by which the christian world is now divided! Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of God: so not every one that boasts that he is of *this* or *that* sect. Who then shall enter into that rest, which remains for the people of God? Let our Saviour and Judge answer the question—"He that doeth the will of my Father, who is in heaven." In view of these solemn considerations, let all unite in this pertinent prayer to the Lord of the universe: "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

MODERN MONUMENTS AT JERUSALEM.

Concluded from p. 116.

TEN paces from this chapel you come to a very narrow stair-case, the steps of which are of wood at the beginning, and of stone at the end. There are twenty in all, by which you ascend to Mount Cal-

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vary. This spot, once so ignominious, having been sanctified by the blood of our Lord, was an object of the particular attention of the first christians. Having removed every impurity, and the earth which was upon it, they surrounded it with walls, so that it is now like a lofty chapel enclosed within this spacious church. It is lined in the interior with marble, and divided by a row of arches into two parts. That towards the north is the spot where our Lord was nailed to the cross. Here thirty two lamps are kept continually burning.

In the other part, which is to the south, the holy cross was erected. You still see the hole dug in the rock, to the depth of about a foot and a half. Near this is the place where stood the crosses of the two thieves. That of the penitent thief was to the north, and the other to the south; so that the first was on the right-hand of our Saviour, who had his face towards the west, and his back to Jerusalem, which lay to the east. Fifty lamps are kept constantly burning in honor of this holy spot.

We visited all the stations till we came to the summit of Calvary. Where shall we look in antiquity for any thing so impressive, so wonderful, as the last scenes described by the evangelist? These are not the absurd adventures of a deity foreign to human nature; it is the most pathetic history—a history, which not only extorts tears by its beauty, but whose consequences, applied to the universe, have changed the face of the earth. I had just beheld the monuments of Greece, and my mind was still profoundly impressed with their grandeur; but how far inferior were the sensations which they excited to those which I felt at the sight of the places commemorated in the gospel! The church of the holy sepulchre, composed of several churches, erected upon an unequal surface, illuminated by a multitude of lamps, is singularly mysterious; a sombre light pervades it, favorable to piety and profound devotion. Christian priests, of various sects, inhabit different parts of the edifice.

I returned to the convent at eleven o'clock, and one hour afterwards I again left it to follow the *Via Dolorosa.* This is the name given to the way, by which the Saviour of the world passed from the residence of Pilate to Calvary.

Pilate's house is a ruin, from which you survey the extensive site of Solomon's temple, and the mosque is erected on that site.

Christ, having been scourged with rods, crowned with thorns, and dressed in a purple robe, was presented to the Jews by Pilate. *Ecce homo!* exclaimed the Judge; and you still see the window, from which these memorable words were pronounced.

A hundred paces from the arch of the *Ecce homo,* I was shown on the left the ruins of a church, formerly dedicated *to our lady of grief.* Fifty paces farther we came to the spot where Simon, the Cyrenean, assisted Jesus to bear the cross.

Having passed the house of the rich man, you turn to the right, and again proceed in a westerly direction. At the entrance of the street, which leads up to Calvary,

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Christ was met by the holy women, who deplored his fate. 110 paces farther is shown the site of the house of Veronica, and the spot where that pious woman wiped the face of the Lord.

Proceeding about another hundred paces, you come to the judicial gate, by which criminals were led to be executed on Golgotha. That hill, now enclosed within the new city, was without the walls of ancient Jerusalem.

The distance from the judicial gate to the summit of Calvary is about 200 paces. Here terminates the Via Dolorosa, which may be in the whole, about a mile in length. We have seen that Calvary is at present comprised in the church of the holy sepulchre. If those who read the history of the passion in the gospels, are overcome with sacred melancholy and profound admiration, what must be his feelings, who traces the scenes themselves at the foot of Mount Sion, in sight of the temple, and within the very walls of Jerusalem?

After this description of the *Via Dolorosa*, and the Church of the holy sepulchre, I shall say very little concerning the other places of devotion in the city. I shall merely enumerate them in the order in which they were visited by me.

1. The house of Anna, near David's gate, at the foot of Mount Sion, within the wall of the city. 2. The place where our Saviour appeared to Mary Magdalen, and the other women. 3. The house of Simon the pharisee, where Magdalen confessed her sins. 4. The monastery of St. Anne, the mother of the blessed Virgin. 5. The prison of St. Peter, near Calvary. 6. Zebedee's house, situated very near St. Peter's prison. 7. The house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where St. Peter took refuge when he had been set at liberty by the angel. 8. The place of the martyrdom of St. James the great.

The reader has now before him a complete view of the christian monuments in Jerusalem.

Extract from a sermon, preached on the Lord's day after the death of Mr. Charles Eliot, a candidate for the ministry, from Job xiv. 19. "Thou destroyest the hope of man."

[We have obtained permission to give a larger extract from this sermon, than we originally contemplated, because we think the reflections contained in the first part of the extract are important, and because many of them have an intimate connexion with the concluding part.]

"The hopes of others rest on their friends; perhaps on their children. We are prompted by instinct to love, to cherish, and to provide for our children. It is the dictate of nature. It is the voice of God. When a child is given us, we receive it with thankfulness. It is a precious gift. It may be a source of pure satisfaction to us. We cannot lift the veil of futurity and read its fate, but we hope the best. We consecrate it to God in baptism. We watch its opening mind. As its powers unfold, if our own hearts are impressed with a sense of religious obliga-

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tion, we sow the seeds of piety. We embody our instructions in our example. We mingle the welfare of our child with our own in our prayers. We endeavour to bring it up for God and for heaven. But we labor in vain and spend our strength for nought. Our child despiseth instruction, and hateth reproof; or, he goes forth into the world, is assailed by temptation, and becomes the victim of vice. In the midst of his sins, he is snatched from the world, and summoned to the tribunal of God. Like Aaron, we may hold our peace, yet our agony is great, our anguish is bitter, for our hopes are destroyed;—ah, how completely, how fatally destroyed!

"But, on the contrary, our child may requite our care, anxiety, and labor, by his filial piety. He may be affectionate and docile. He may listen to our instructions, heed our admonitions, receive and improve the lessons of virtue. We behold him with inexpressible delight, consecrating his early affections to God. We furnish him with the means of improvement, and he diligently employs them. As he advances in life our heart cleaves to him more strongly. No man can describe the feelings of a parent towards an affectionate and dutiful child. No man but a parent can conceive them. We imagine we behold the dawn of a bright and lasting day. We anticipate the eminence he will reach, the good he will do, the happiness he will enjoy in the world. He is to be the staff of our age, to support and to guide our declining footsteps, and when we are gone, he is to shed lustre on our memory, to add dignity to our family and name.

"But suddenly our fair prospect is obscured. Disease arrests him, induced, perhaps, by his honorable exertions to render himself respectable and useful in life. With indescribable anguish we witness his decline. The rose fades from his cheek. The eyes lose their lustre, or assume a brightness which is unnatural, and which fills a parent's heart with fearful forebodings. The strength decays. We can no longer hide from ourselves the painful truth. We had hoped that he would watch over *us* in our last moments, and pay the mournful tribute of affection at *our* tomb. But the scene is reversed. We must watch over *him*. We must smooth *his* dying pillow. We must close his eyes in darkness and death. *The heart knoweth its own bitterness.* We feel as Job felt, when he said, '*Thou destroyest the hope of man.*'

"Blessed be God for the hope of immortality! Our hopes do not perish in the grave. By the eye of faith, we penetrate beyond it. We lift the curtain of eternity, and behold our child alive and happy. We behold him still advancing in knowledge and virtue. We behold him filling an important sphere, devoting his talents and his acquisitions to valuable purposes; perhaps employed in doing good. It was not a vain thing then, that we labored for his benefit. It was not a vain thing that his mind was stored with knowledge, and his heart impressed with pi-

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ety. He was the better qualified for the duties of a higher scene. He was the better prepared for heaven. 'He pleased God, and was beloved of Him, so that, living among sinners, he was translated. Yea, speedily was he taken away, lest wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul. For his soul pleased the Lord, therefore hasted he to take him away.'

"Of this nature are the consolations which the blessed gospel, revealing to us a Saviour, who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification, enables us to possess ourselves, and to offer to afflicted parents, under the loss of a pious child.

"Of this nature are the consolations we can offer to those parents, who, during the past week, have been deprived of a child, whose talents, whose learning, uncommon for his years, whose amiable character and ardent piety, had excited the fondest and most sanguine hope and expectation.

"It is not my practice, as you know, on ordinary occasions to eulogize the dead. Often would my heart prompt me to dwell, in this place, on the character of departed worth, to hold up its most striking features to your view, and to urge your imitation. But I am forbidden. It would be imprudent; it might often be unjust to discriminate. When, however, a young man is removed, who was not only a member of my church, but a fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, I feel myself more at liberty to indulge my feelings, and to bear my public testimony to his excellence.

"The young man, whom I now commemorate, I rejoice to say it, was one of ourselves. Here he was presented at the baptismal font, here he made his own profession, and here, on the day of his introduction to the sacred desk, he appeared as a public advocate for christianity, and exhibited, in a most striking and impressive manner, its reasonableness and its value.

"When he was about to enter on the study of theology, I had a long conversation with him, on the nature of the profession, on its labors and cares, its encouragements and hopes. He opened his heart to me; he exhibited the motives which prompted his decision. They were of the purest and most exalted kind. His subsequent conduct, his intense application to his studies, his diligent cultivation of christian graces, and the exhibition he gave of his improvement, confirmed my belief of his sincerity. You have heard him preach, and you cannot forget the simplicity of his manner, the chasteness and elegance of his style, the soundness and clearness of his reasoning, and the fervency of his devotion. But you knew not half his worth. To his near friends it belongs to dwell on the remembrance of his virtues, and to them, too, it belongs to peruse with delight and admiration the memorials of talents and piety, he has left behind him.

"His character, I hope I shall be pardoned for saying it, was not fully developed, even to his nearest relations, till his death.

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Among his papers were found some which contained the plan of his future life, drawn up when he was only seventeen, and containing sentiments and feelings, which do the highest honor to his head and heart.

"In the period of sickness, he was calm and resigned Though he undoubtedly must have often suffered, yet so fearful was he of disturbing his friends, that he suppressed the rising emotion, and uttered scarce a groan or a sigh.

"The earthly hopes of his friends with respect to him are destroyed; but they are supported by higher and better hopes. They expect to meet him again, and, we trust, that whilst they cherish his memory, they will imitate his virtues.

"As the hope of man is so often destroyed, as the objects of this world are fading, its blessings uncertain, its pleasures transitory, let us fix our hopes on heaven, and seek, through the merits and mediation of Jesus, to obtain *an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.*"

SERIOUS PREACHING.

Preaching is one of the most effectual methods of promoting religion. To the greater part of the world, truth is never so impressive as when it comes to them from the lips of a fellow-being. To many persons, books are wearisome; but to all, the human voice is a powerful excitement. Religion, when she speaks with earnestness and seriousness through her ministers, finds her way to the attention of those, whom no other mode of instruction would awaken. This consideration gives inexpressible importance to the office of ministers, and should lead them anxiously to inquire in what way its objects may most effectually be secured.

It is agreed on all hands, that preaching, to be useful, must be *serious*, i. e. the preacher must be in earnest, must feel deeply the importance of the message he bears, must speak from the heart, and must propose to reach the hearts of his hearers. On a subject so interesting, a few remarks may not be unacceptable.

Serious preaching has its foundation in seriousness of character. It is not an art to be learned by rules. The best school for it is the school of meditation, of devotion, and of habitual obedience to the divine commands. The man, who would communicate seriousness to his preaching, must begin with his own character. He must endeavour to acquire continually more clear and affecting views of religion, must open his heart to its influence, must learn by experience its power and happiness, must cherish within himself the impressions which he wishes to communicate.

One great cause of [illegible] deficiency of seriousness [illegible] is sometimes observed [illegible] is, that their studies [illegible] tations are not sufficiently [illegible] on the *practical* [illegible]

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They are laborious inquirers, but their labors are very much confined to the difficult, disputed, and I had almost said the barren parts of theology. They are anxious to acquire precise views, on subjects which have embarrassed the most profound; or to give consistency to a theory, the jarring materials of which no ingenuity can reconcile. The most important truths of religion, those which awaken the heart, which are the very springs of a holy life, because so common and plain, are comparatively overlooked. Religion is considered a subject for study and speculation, not a system of motives and rules to be felt and obeyed. Hence the heart is cold, whilst the understanding boasts of its light. Perhaps the preacher is warm enough in enforcing his peculiarities, but is languid in unfolding and urging those principles of holy living, on which the salvation of the soul depends.

I would by no means repress in ministers the spirit of inquiry. To them it particularly belongs to search the scriptures, to rescue from oblivion neglected truths, to clear away the rubbish of human additions and misinterpretations, to expose the errors which so much disfigure the gospel, and to show that christianity is a reasonable service. But ministers should not forget that the plainest truths are after however most important. The ed, who utes of God; his of my affection and revborer creatures; the vafeel ; the various indulg ditions which form the christian temper; the example, and offices, and benefits of Jesus Christ; the motives he has offered to piety and virtue; and especially the animating views of life and immortality which he has given; these and similar topics, which have a direct bearing and a powerful influence on *character*, deserve the first and principal attention of the religious teacher. These he should bring home to his own heart, and his study should be to present them most powerfully to the hearts of others.

The minister must not forget, that his business is, not to amuse men with subtleties of speculation, much less to make them fiery and angry advocates of doubtful dogmas, but to save their souls, to guide them to eternal happiness; and he must never forget, that he can contribute to this end in no other way, than by operating on their characters, tempers, and lives, by making them devout, benevolent, and pure, the true followers of Jesus Christ, the obedient children of God. Every thing depends, he must remember, on the *character* which his hearers form. His great object therefore should be to acquire just, clear, and enlarged conceptions of the character which Jesus Christ requires, of all the means and motives by which it is formed, of all the dangers to which it is exposed, and of the various methods, by which it may be rendered most attractive and interesting to men. Some may think that this part of christian truth is easily and universally acquired. They mistake. There

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is not a virtue, which, if traced back to its origin and causes, and followed through all its motives, connexions, and effects, does not spread out into a wide field of thought. By how many is this field unexplored! Have you never found ministers, who are animated enough, when treating of dark and doubtful doctrines; but who become dry, dull, and insipid, the moment they touch on those fruitful and delightful subjects, the spirit and virtues of christianity? You would suppose from their preaching, that the science of christian morals was a barren region, on which not a flower expands, through which not a stream flows; and yet Paradise was not more blooming, or watered by fresher and more copious springs.

The serious preacher, in choosing his subjects, will select such as are suited to make on his hearers deep *practical* impressions. To make men *better* will be the end deliberately proposed in every discourse; and he will pray to God for light and aid in the accomplishment of this most important work. Having with such views chosen his subject, the preacher should awaken his intellect, and concentrate his attention, that he may conceive of it with clearness and force. He should endeavour to spread it out in his mind, to view it in a great variety of lights and connexions, that he may furnish a variety of useful and interesting thoughts. Dull, languid, trite, and frigid reflections, such as pall upon the ear from endless repetition, should not content him. His mind should *toil*. Some new views, some new arrangements of thought should, if possible, be formed. The hearer should be assailed, if possible, from some new points. This I know is severe labor, perhaps the severest a man can bear. But a serious preacher will prove himself in earnest by submitting to this toil. He will not show his seriousness by vociferation in the pulpit. He will not depend on the strength of his lungs, or the violence of his gestures to keep a congregation from sleeping. This is a very cheap way of gaining the reputation of a serious preacher. His seriousness will exert itself in his study, where no eye but God sees him. It will there excite him to pray, and to unite with prayer the most intense labor which his intellect will endure, that he may acquire the most striking and valuable thoughts which his subject will admit.

The serious preacher, having thus acquired thoughts, will next labor to *express* them with the greatest effect; and here he will call in the aid of imagination. He will endeavour to borrow from nature, and every scene around him, similitudes and allusions, which will throw light, and beauty, and animation on his discourse. I know that some consider seriousness in the pulpit as inconsistent with ornament. If they mean that it is inconsistent with a light and frothy style, with an accumulation of pretty comparisons and high sounding words, designed for self-display, they are right. The *flowery* preacher, who aims to play the orator, is unworthy

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the sacred place he fills. But do not therefore suppose, that a man to be serious must renounce imagination, and clothe religion in the homeliest garb. Chaste ornament, designed to enliven and recommend instruction, is not misplaced on the holiest theme. It is the proper attire of piety and virtue. The nature of man is ever to be consulted by preachers. He is not pure intellect. He has fancy, and delights in its exercise. Naked truth may suit the philosopher; but the multitude of men wish to have it arrayed in happy similitudes. They cannot seize it, when it presents itself in the abstract propositions of the metaphysician. It must be embodied, brought down to their senses, by illustrations and resemblances from visible objects. Let none say, that this propensity of our nature is not to be gratified. Who ever gratified it more than Jesus Christ? I know not in any age or nation a teacher, who so tenderly adapted himself to the frame of the human mind, and who has adorned his instructions with such variety and felicity of figurative language, as Jesus. I do not refer merely to his exquisite parables. Take any of his discourses; take his sermon on the mount. You can hardly find a truth, to which he has not communicated life and impressiveness by the aid of metaphor. Among the qualifications of our heavenly Teacher, I should certainly reckon the richness and exuberance of his imagination. It ought not indeed to be expected of every preacher, that he will possess a high degree of this quality. But he ought to cultivate, and to turn to account, whatever powers he possesses. The art of communicating his thoughts with felicity and vividness is an invaluable qualification for a public instructer. These remarks are important, especially in the present discussion, because some think, that to preach seriously is to preach without ornament. Preaching, we are told, cannot be too plain. If by plainness is meant *perspicuity*, the maxim cannot be urged too often on ministers. But it means something more. Perhaps we shall not be uncharitable in supposing, that in some cases this love of plainness is the refuge of sloth. No little labor is required to collect striking illustrations, and to place subjects in interesting lights; whilst nothing is easier than to repeat continually common ideas in worn out language. The serious preacher will desire no such plainness as this. Feeling that the eternal interests of men are in a measure dependent on his instructions, and that all instruction is unavailing, unless attention be attracted and secured, he will spare no effort to give to the truth an attractive form. Having collected the best thoughts, he will conscientiously convey them in the best manner which his powers and improvements will admit.

Much remains to be said, to complete the delineation of serious preaching, but it must be deferred to a future number of the work.

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THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

It cannot be denied, that in the present age, too little distinction is observable in the pursuits and in the manners of those who profess to believe, and of those who profess to deny the divine authority of Jesus. The Jew maintains the honor of his law-giver, and observes in the heart of christendom the painful Mosaic institutions, with obstinate scrupulosity, undiverted by the changes of manners and the disadvantages of situation. The Mahometan guards with jealousy the credit of his prophet, and the authority of his sacred books, while neither rank nor riches exempt him from a strict observance of the rituals prescribed by the Koran. The voluntary penances and mortifications of the Hindoo would be almost incredible, if repeated attestations had not assured us of the astonishing force of prejudice, connected with religious opinions. But the Christian seems the more indifferent about his faith, in proportion as it is more pure; less scrupulous about ritual institutions, as they are more simple, easy, and useful; and less ambitious of exhibiting the peculiarities of the christian character, when they constitute the only distinctions worthy the attainment of an immortal mind. Let it be our present object then, to call up some of the marks of the christian character, which ought to distinguish the real disciples of Christ from the world.

In the first place a christian is one who believes in Jesus. Faith in him is the root of christian virtue. If the christian could in any way be assured that the life, the death, and resurrection of his Saviour were a fable, all his consolations in life, and his hopes for eternity, would fall, unsupported and irrecoverable. It is true that a man, whose understanding was never convinced of the truth, and whose heart was never interested by the worth of christianity, may present to the world a regular and polished life, an integrity, unsullied by spots deep enough to draw the censure of the age. But whence even these correct notions and habits? From early instruction? Did his instructers then know nothing of the revelation of Christ? But let it be supposed, that the mind may be stored with honorable principles, and that all the nice distinctions of right and wrong may be made familiar to the understanding, without the aid of the christian revelation. What is to give these sentiments the weight of laws? Whence is this goodly morality to find its sanctions? Will you seek them in the censure and the applause of the world, in the regulations of civil government, or in the rewards and punishments of conscience? No. You answer, we will seek them in the retributions of a future life. This is the very conclusion, to which we would lead you. These sanctions, which lie beyond the dark boundary of human sight, are properly discerned only by faith in Jesus. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal

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life;" and this alone is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith. Thus you see, that when faith in Christ is represented as the first distinguishing mark of the christian character, we recommend no cold speculation, no barren belief, but a sentiment which lives, and moves, and is enthroned in the breast; without which morality is but a temporary calculation of convenience, benevolence a transient instinct, piety a doubtful and wavering principle.

A second mark of the christian character, is a uniform regard to the doctrine of christianity, and to the scriptures, in which it is contained. It is in vain to expect a christian character, except from christian principles; and the force of these principles can be preserved only by an habitual regard to the instructions, and frequent reference to the authority of the word of God. The christian, in any doubtful point of conduct, does not anxiously inquire into the sentiments of the world. He is not solicitous to know what the laws of honor or the tyranny of custom dictates; but he asks, does this become a disciple of Jesus Christ? If I had been admitted to his company on earth, could the world from this action take knowledge of me that I had been with Jesus? Is it the noble morality of the gospel? Would the motives, which now impel me, have existed and have operated, had Christ never lived, never taught, and never died?

A third trait in the character of a christian, is a high admiration, united with frequent study and humble imitation of the character of Christ. He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk even as Jesus walked. An indifferent reader of the history of our Saviour might observe with all the coolness of customary commendation, how faultless the example! how happy if this world were filled with such piety, such self command, such unwearied and active goodness! But here he stops. The character of Jesus is deposited in the memory of such a man with other illustrious names of ancient and modern story, to be occasionally produced to give currency to an encomium, or to add weight to an exhortation in praise of fortitude, disinterestedness, compassion, or some other virtue. But with the christian, Jesus is an example, because he is a friend. He imitates, because he loves and admires. While we imitate what we admire, we insensibly resemble what we love. As in painting, artists are distinguished into schools, according to the great masters, whose works they have copied and admired; so the character of the christian should show, that he has studied exclusively in the school of Christ. If he has caught the prominent characteristics of this school, it is because he has been habitually looking to Jesus.

We observed, that the character we love, we insensibly imitate. This suggests another quality, included in the assemblage of christian graces, that is, love to Christ including gratitude and joy. *Whom having not seen ye love.* We should

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judge meanly of that man's patriotism, who should own that he felt no sentiments of affection and gratitude toward the deliverer of his country, because his eyes had never been indulged with a sight of his person. We do not despise the veneration with which the tombs of the wise and good are visited; we do not hastily wipe away, as if ashamed, the grateful tear which is ready to fall on the sod, which is supposed to cover them; we do not check every enthusiastic expression of affection, of admiration, of gratitude, which a recollection of their worth inspires. Why then should the greatest benefactor of the human race, be recollected with *no gratitude*, contemplated with *no love?* Why must the glow of affection be quenched on this subject alone? Why must the passions be excluded from nothing but religion? Will you reply, that our Saviour hath said, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me?" It may be answered, that love itself is one of these commandments; and obedience will never be cheerful, unwearied, and delightful, till the christian has imbibed something of the spirit which suggested Peter's eloquent appeal: "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." Let us ever remember, that we are not the philosophical pupils of a teacher, whose party we have espoused, and whose doctrines our reason only is interested in advocating; but the disciples of one, who has suffered and died, that we might live forever.

Another mark of the christian character is fortitude and stedfastness in the profession of christianity. "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this evil and adulterous generation, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in his own glory and his Father's with all the holy angels." To go to the altar, and there solemnly to abjure our profession of christianity, is not the only way of betraying the cause of Christ. False shame of religion, or cowardice of temper, may be detected in a thousand fashionable compliances, a thousand omissions of unpopular duties, a thousand excuses to extenuate these omissions. Much of that servile accommodation to the sentiments and manners of the age, which has almost thrown out of sight the distinctions of the christian character, may be traced to the want of fortitude.

The last quality of the christian character now to be considered, is brotherly love. "One is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren;" and by this shall all men know that ye are Christ's disciples, if ye have love one to another. In the early ages of christianity, when its professors were harassed by persecution, the multitude of them that believed, says the historian, were of *one heart* and *one soul*. From this time did such a union become forever impracticable? Does there not yet remain to christians one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all? Are not christians

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all called in one hope, the hope of everlasting life? Does there not exist among the innumerable sects, into which the school of Christ is divided, some relics of the original principles of our great Founder, sufficient to form a broad base of union, exertion, co-operation, and love? Shall not at least the bond of peace be preserved? Shall it ever be forgotten, that the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned? Or must the strong arm of infidel persecution, be lifted as in former days, to drive into closer and more efficient union, those who bear the common name of Jesus! Shall those, who profess to be travelling to the same region of celestial love, agree in nothing but mutual suspicion, condemnation, and reproach? Who would take knowledge of such a people, that they had ever been with Jesus? With no small severity may the disciples of Christ be asked, What do ye more than others? Ye are the light of the world Let your light then so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, who is in heaven.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, &c.

Continued from page 215.

22.

Matthew iii. 8 9. "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance; and think not to say within yourselves, WE HAVE ABRAHAM TO OUR FATHER. For I say unto you, that *God is able, of these stones, to raise up children unto Abraham.*"

"WE have Abraham to our father." This, above all things, was the boast of the descendants of Abraham. Therefore, they thought, they were the children of God, to the exclusion of the rest of mankind; and therefore, likewise, *they were certain of a portion in the life to come.* How forcible then is the reference, which John makes to this national sentiment of the Jews, when he is requiring of them repentance, as a preparation for their reception of the Messiah, and of admission to his kingdom? "Think not to say within yourselves, *we have Abraham to our father.* This is no security of a spiritual relation to God, nor of your final acceptance; *for even of these stones,* God is able to raise such children *as you are* unto Abraham. If ye would become disciples, or subjects of Christ, *bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.*"

Some commentators suppose, that when John said, "God is able, *of these stones,* to raise up children unto Abraham," he pointed to the Gentiles, who were among his hearers; and that he applied this expression to them, either because they worshipped gods of stone, or on account of that hardness of heart, with which they had long resisted the plainest doctrines of revelation.

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But turn to Luke xix. 40, and you will find the proverbial expression, which John has here a little varied, in the application which he wished to make of it. When some of the Pharisees asked Jesus to rebuke his disciples, because they cried out, as they saw him riding into Jerusalem, "blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; peace in heaven, and glory in the highest!" he answered, "I tell you, that *if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.*" The expression is highly figurative; but considering it as applied by our Lord *directly* to "the Pharisees," and by John to "the Pharisees and Sadducees," and intended to indicate the hardness of their hearts, and their slowness to receive truth, compared with which, *the very stones* were susceptible, and might be supposed to become eloquent; the reproof, in both cases, is more severe, while in neither does it exceed the limitations of the most exact justice.

Consult Whitby on Rom. ii. 13, and Grotius and Lightfoot on the text.

23.

Luke iii. 12. "Then came also *publicans* to be baptized."

"The order of publicans," says Cicero, (Oratio pro Plancio,) "consisted of the choicest of the Roman Knights; was the ornament of the city, and the support of the commonwealth." They were the officers who collected the revenues of the empire, and accounted for them to the emperor. The publicans, or collectors of the provinces, were but deputies of those in Rome; and perhaps, without injustice, were generally considered as extortioners and thieves. The office, and all who were in it in Judea, were alike abhorred by the Jews. It was considered by all of them, as in the highest degree disgraceful to pay tribute to the Romans; and the disciples of Judas Gaulonites absolutely refused to pay the tax, alleging, that it was not permitted to a true Israelite, to acknowledge any other sovereign than God.

The Babylonian Talmud says, "among those, who are neither worthy to sit as judges, nor to give testimony in judgment, are to be numbered *exactors* and *publicans;* and in the same sentence it joins *publicans* with *murderers* and *robbers.* "Of men," says Maimonides, "who are presumed to be thieves, and whose property is believed to have been gotten by violence, *as of publicans and robbers,* it is not lawful to use their money, nor to mix it with your own, because it has been acquired by rapine." They were looked upon as heathens; and the priests would not receive from them an offering for the temple, any more than they would the price of blood. In this national sentiment concerning the publicans, we see the force of the expression, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or *even as this publican;*" and in this character of them we perceive the propriety of the admonition which John addressed to them, "*exact no more than that which is appointed you.*"

The Roman laws required, that when any farmer, or publi-

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can, was convicted of extortion, he should be obliged to render four times the value of what he had extorted. It was, without doubt, with reference to this law, that Zaccheus said, "if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him *four-fold.*" (Luke xix. 8.)

See Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. and Tal. on Matt. v. 46. Beausobre and L'Enfant's Introd. p. 110; and Calmet on the word *publican.*

24.

Luke iii. 15. "And as *the people were in expectation*, and all men mused in their hearts concerning John, *whether he were the Christ, or not*—"

This is one of many expressions of the evangelist, which imply the general expectation which prevailed, that the Messiah was to appear at this time. In the 6th of our illustrations, we adduced some of the evidences of the prevalence of this expectation. It may not be improper here to notice some of the circumstances, which caused the Jews to reject Jesus as the Messiah; but we shall only notice them in passing, as we shall have frequent occasions for a more full examination.

The "reasoning which arose among the disciples, which of them should be the greatest;" and the request of the mother of James and John to our Lord, that "her sons might sit, one on his right hand, and the other on the left, in his kingdom;" are very plain intimations, that his disciples at that time thought only of *a powerful, temporal kingdom.* It was the disappointment of this expectation to which the disciples referred, when conversing with him after his resurrection; "*we trusted that it had been he, who should have redeemed Israel.*" They had believed that Judea would have been redeemed from its bondage to the Romans. Nor had any of the Jews better sentiments of the kingdom of the Messiah.—So eager were the expectations of the "five thousand," whom Jesus had fed with "five barley loaves, and two small fishes," that he was obliged to retire, to escape from the "force, by which they would have taken him, and have made him a king;" (John vi. 15.) and it was the enthusiasm of the hope, that he was about to ascend the throne of Judea, which prompted the multitudes to "spread their garments in the way," when he was once entering Jerusalem, and to "strew the streets with branches of palm trees," going before and following him with the acclamations, "*Hosanna to the son of David! Blessed is the king of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord!*" (John xii. 13.) Now had John suggested, that this fondest hope of the nation was to be realized in the triumphs of the Messiah, whom he announced, and had our Lord commenced his ministry with the assurance, that this was his design, and that he would accomplish it, it is certain beyond a doubt, that every Jew would have hailed him as a Saviour, and that the resources of his country would have been offered to his disposal. With their expectations of the Messiah, compare then the teaching, the con-

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duct, and the purposes of Jesus, and you may account satisfactorily for every circumstance of his reception.

There was indeed a striking difference between the conduct of the Pharisees and Sadducees, towards our Lord, and of the people. These two great sects very soon perceived, how entirely devoid he was of the sentiments and temper, by which they were themselves actuated. From him, whose peculiar blessings were bestowed on "*the poor in spirit*," "*the meek*," "*the merciful*," "*the peace makers*," and "*those who hungered and thirsted after righteousness;*" who taught men to pray, to fast, and to give their alms "*in secret;*" to hope for the recompense of obedience to his laws "*at the resurrection of the just*," and who openly rejected *the traditions of the elders*, they could indulge no hope of worldly conquests, and of a universal temporal empire. But the people, less ambitious of personal distinction in the kingdom of the Messiah, and persuaded by the works of Jesus, that he must be *the Christ*, still cherished the delightful vision of the deliverance of their country, and followed him, in confidence of its accomplishment. They were *astonished at his doctrines;* they felt that *he taught as one that had authority, and not as the scribes;* they were convinced that, as *never man spake like this man*, so *no one could do the miracles which he did, except God were with him;* and while they retained these impressions, they would have forsaken all, to follow him. But as often as circumstances occurred to blast their sanguine, but erroneous expectations, with the two great predominant sects of their countrymen, they forsook him, and were prepared to become the instruments for his execution. Let any one notice, how exactly consistent is the account which we have of the *conduct* of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and of the people, with their sentiments and characters, and I think that he will acknowledge in it a very strong internal evidence of the credibility of the narratives of the evangelists.

When we reflect also, that the Sadducees denied the doctrines of *providence*, of *a future life*, and of *the existence of spirits*, it will not appear surprising that they rejected Jesus, who taught, that these were fundamental principles, which must be acknowledged by all the subjects of his kingdom. Such men, in consistency with their sentiments, could have looked only for a temporal prince, and for temporal honors and happiness, and when we consider that the Pharisees believed, and taught the people, that all *who had Abraham for their father* were therefore sure of future felicity, from which all others would be excluded, it is equally apparent, that they must have experienced a most important change—a change, which could have been produced only by that "repentance," which John at first preached, and which Jesus made his first precept—before they would be prepared for the reception of a Messiah, whose dominion was to be established in the heart; who taught that *all*, who received him, were *equally*

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the sons of God; who admonished his followers to prepare for trials and sufferings in his service; and who promised no rewards, but in heaven. So corrupt had the nation become, both in opinions and in practice, that a stronger contrast can hardly be imagined, than of the instructions of Jesus, with the characters of the Jews; a contrast, which gives amazing force to the requirement, "REPENT, *for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" To one, who knows the moral and religious state of Judea at this time, the acknowledgment of Jesus by these great prevailing sects, and by all the people, would have been the most wonderful phenomenon which ever occurred in the moral world.

But though so many of his countrymen rejected Jesus, and the multitude, who had acknowledged and followed him, joined in the cry, that he should be crucified, yet we have the testimony of the apostles, (Acts xxi. 17, 20.) that within a very short time after the resurrection, "*many thousands,*" or, as it may with strict propriety be rendered, "*many ten thousands* of the Jews believed;" and the extensive country of Syria, it is well known, was in a great measure converted to christianity within ten or twelve years after the crucifixion.

It was the mistaken sentiments of the Jews concerning the Messiah, which caused our Lord to forbid those, whom he healed, to publish their cure; and which induced him so rarely to assert before the people, that he was THE CHRIST. While they had so strong a persuasion that the Messiah would be a temporal deliver, it was impossible otherwise to restrain them from attempts to raise him to supreme power; which would have exposed both them and him to the resentment of the Roman government. Hence, in speaking of himself, he said only, that *the Father had sent him;* and, "*if I do not the works of my Father, believe me not;*" and to effect his purposes, he wrought miracles, appealed to the scriptures, preached righteousness, and endeavoured to correct the false sentiments and the evil affections of those who heard him. It was necessary that he should act precisely as he did, in consistency with the divine character, which he sustains throughout the gospels.

"I am come," said our Lord, "in my Father's name, and ye receive me not. If another shall come in his own name, him will ye receive." And it is well known how many impostors about that time appeared in Judea, to whom multitudes resorted in the wilderness, to hear *the promise of liberty,* and to enlist themselves for its attainment. But with their followers, they were scattered, and miserably perished in their delusion; and of all who avowed themselves to be the expected Prince of Israel, Jesus alone has been acknowledged by the suffrages of ages. His kingdom is established—is extending—and will be eternal.

The general belief that the Messiah would appear at the time when our Lord began his

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ministry, was derived from the prophecies; and the argument from prophecy lies merely in the evidence produced, that certain passages in the Old Testament, which have ever been acknowledged as predictions, have been fulfilled by certain correspondent events, related in the New. The argument in no degree depends on faith, but is adapted to produce it; the sole point in question being this, whether such things as were prophetically delivered, appear to have been fulfilled—a point on which common sense, with common honesty, will secure a correct decision.

Consult Lardner, vol. 1. pp. 131—139. And see bishop Hurd's sermons on prophecy, sermon 5, p. 154. And Jones on the canon of the New Testament, v. 1. pp. 90, 91.

Any of our readers who would consult the authorities which are most easily to be obtained upon the question, "was Jesus the Messiah, who was predicted by the prophets?" are referred also to Leslie's "Case of the Jews considered, with respect to christianity;" to Grotius "On the truth of the christian religion;" to Sykes' "Essay on the truth of the christian religion;" to Leland's "Deistical writers;" article, Collins; to Stillingfleet's "Orig. Sac. B. 2. chap. 7; to Payley's Evidences, Boston ed. p. 209; to Priestley's Letters to the Jews; to Bishop Chandler's Defence of christianity; and his Vindication of the defence. To Prideaux and Shuckford's Connexions.

AN AFFECTING ACCOUNT OF LIEUT. GAMAGE.

Richard S. Gamage was born Sept. 29, 1785. In 1808 he was made a Lieutenant by Admiral Cochrane. In June 1812 he was appointed first Lieutenant of the Griffon. On the 23d of Nov. following, he was executed for the murder of sergeant Lake. On the day of execution Admiral Foley sent a most excellent circular address to every ship in his fleet, calling upon officers, and upon all under their command, to take warning by the awful event. In this address the character of the unfortunate man is thus given: "Lieut. Gamage is represented by every person who knew him, and by the unanimous voice of the Griffon ship's company, as a humane, compassionate man, a kind, indulgent officer; yet for want of that guard which every man should keep over his passions, this kind, humane, compassionate man commits the dreadful crime of murder." The circumstances, which led to this shocking event, were thus stated under oath.

The deceased sergeant Lake had behaved in the most violent and mutinous manner, by threatening to beat the carpenter of the ship, his superior officer, who lodged a complaint with Lieut. Gamage, then commanding on board; the Lieut. sent for Lake, and ordered him to walk the quarter deck with a shouldered musket, as a slight summary punishment. This order the sergeant, in a pe-

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remptory and insulting manner, repeatedly refused to obey. Mr. Gamage, enraged, ran below for his sabre. When he came again on deck, the sergeant had so far complied, as to hold a musket in his hand. Mr. Gamage struck the musket with his sword, expressed his indignation, and ordered the sergeant to walk about. He shouldered arms, and appeared to comply; upon which the Lieut. returned his sword to its scabbard, and turned to walk away. But in the same instant Lake threw down the musket, and with a loud oath asserted his determination to persist in his disobedience. Lieut. Gamage became infuriated, made a short thrust, which, taking an upward direction, entered his body, and occasioned his almost instant death.

On the trial Lieut. Gamage made the following declaration. "Here, before God and my country, I most solemnly disclaim any intention to endanger the life of the deceased; and declare, I meant simply to intimidate him, and enforce obedience to my order. Acting on this principle, I several times struck the musket, which he held in his hand, and desired him to walk about. This seemingly had the desired effect. He shouldered arms, and my sword was returned to its scabbard. But in the very same instant, my soul still glowing with indignation at his outrageous behaviour, he with a ferocious air and aspect, accompanied by imprecations, again refused compliance, and dared me to the fatal act. The imposing attitude of the man, the firm arrangement of his features, his high ingratitude and disdain, working upon my imagination, already infuriate with reiterated exasperation, shot like a flash of lightning across my brain. Reason forsook its seat, raging madness usurped the sway; and my sword, obeying its horrid mandate, was passed into his body. Cruel, cruel sword! which at once plunged him into eternity, to appear unappointed before his God, and me into the deepest gloom of misery and remorse."

On such ground the Lieutenant pleaded not guilty of the crime of deliberate murder. The court martial, however, sentenced him to death, but recommended him to the mercy of the government.

Great exertions were made to procure a mitigation of his punishment, but in vain. The affair was made a cabinet question, and the law lords were consulted. After three weeks of corroding sorrow and suspense, the unhappy Gamage was informed that his pardon was impossible. At first this intelligence overpowered him. All the disgrace and ignominy of his sentence then appeared present to his imagination. The clergyman, who attended him, states, that "The struggle was severe, but he rose from it triumphant. The Almighty touched his heart, and he became a convert to real christianity; his last day was spent in acts of piety, gratitude, and affection. I passed the night on board the Griffon; was with him late and early, yet I can give but a faint picture of his happy state. He was composed, re-

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signed, pious, and in charity with all men. No fears for himself shook his mind; but the regrets arising from the sudden dismissal of the unhappy Lake harassed his bosom with inextinguishable woe; and as an emblem of his feelings towards him, he requested to be interred by his side. As the time drew near, he evinced no symptom of alarm, but his fortitude and resignation seemed to accumulate with every hour. On Sunday evening he sent for several of the ship's company, and in pathetic terms expressed his gratitude for the affection they had shown him, and bade them a final adieu. The poor fellows, melted by his touching manner and appearance, shed abundance of tears; and, spreading the affecting tale among their messmates, the whole ship presented but one scene of commiseration and distress.

"The residue of the night was spent in serious preparation for his awful change. About one in the morning, he fell into a deep sleep, which continued tranquil till six. He then arose, and dressed in black. From six till nine was employed in earnest devotion. At nine a gun was fired, and the signal for punishment was hoisted. I fixed my eyes stedfastly on his countenance. It betrayed no signs of alarm, no anxiety, but a heavenly serenity beamed in every feature. He observed my gaze, and reading its inquiry, he exclaimed, *'feel me: I do not tremble: death has now no terrors for me. God is with me; Christ is with me; my Saviour is with me.'*

"At a quarter after nine, he was joined in prayer by the officers of the ship. At a quarter before ten, he heard the dreadful annunciation of READINESS, without the alteration of a single feature. He replied, *'I am prepared; my Saviour is with me.'* He then ascended the companion ladder, and proceeded along the deck, with a slow but steady step, to the foot of the platform. He then leaned for a short time on the shoulder of a friend, looked earnestly at the ship's company, and said, *see how a christian can die!* He then mounted the forecastle. He gave me his last adieu, blessed, and kissed me. My heart could sustain the burden of its feelings no longer; I rushed from the forecastle; the appointed signal was given, and my lamented friend hurried into eternity."

On the Saturday morning before his execution, he began a letter to his sister. After giving her some account of the happy state of his mind, he expressed his feelings in the form of prayer. "O Almighty and merciful Father, may I hope, through the blood of thy beloved Son, to find rest in heaven! Yes, my God, thou knowest that I pray with all the fervency thou hast gifted me with, and that I acknowledge thee as the only true God, and my Saviour as thy Son, who sits at thy right hand on the judgment seat of heaven; and when I bow myself down at thy footstool in the other world, may my Saviour say to me, 'Come, my beloved, to the kingdom, prepared for you: your sins are forgiven.' O merciful and most just

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God, thou hast said, thou wilt receive the prayers of the most ignorant, as well as the most learned, as long as it is from the heart; and now I say, O my God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

He added to his letter on Sunday morning, and Sunday evening—"Sunday morning—O Eliza, the hour draws near; the warrant is on board—The Almighty bears me up; he hears my prayers, he has not forsaken me." At evening—"O my Eliza, the sensations that now rise in my bosom are beyond expression. The evening closing in, the silent crew, the dejected looks of my messmates, add to the solemnity of the trial; but few can feel what I feel. Yet I thank God, that I have had time to repent. O Almighty Father, once more let me beg for forgiveness, for now all my hopes are in heaven. This last month has indeed been a month of sorrows, of hopes, of fears; and lastly of misery, ignominy, and death. But now I can say with holy Job, 'the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.' In hopes of a blessed resurrection, and of a pardon for my sins through the merits of the only Son of God, in whom I stedfastly believe, I lay me down to rest awhile."

This affecting narrative would naturally afford many important reflections and remarks; but we shall close it by another extract from the Admiral's pathetic and admonitory address. This we do, in hope that the account will attract the attention of many in this country, who are engaged in military affairs; by sea and by land.—"Let his example strike deep into the minds of all who witness his unhappy end; and whatever their general disposition may be, let them learn from him, that if they are not always watchful, to restrain their passions within proper bounds, one moment of intemperate anger may destroy the hopes of a well spent, honorable life, and bring them to an untimely and disgraceful death; and let those who are to obey, learn from the conduct of the sergeant the fatal effects which may result from contempt and insolent conduct towards their superiors. By repeated insolence the sergeant overcame the kind and gentle disposition of Lieut. Gamage, and by irritating and inflaming his passions occasioned his own death.

"The commander in chief hopes, that this afflicting lesson may not be offered in vain; but seriously contemplating the awful example before them, every *officer* and every *man* will learn from it, never to suffer himself to be driven by ill governed passions, to treat with cruelty or violence those, over whom he is to command; nor by disobedience or disrespect, to rouse the passions of those, whom it is his duty to obey and respect."

THE ABOLISHED INQUISITION IN SPAIN.

By official documents, published in the Columbian Centinel for Oct. 13, 1813, it appears, that the Inquisition in Spain was

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abolished by the existing civil government about the first of March. In a paper still more recent it has been stated, that the Inquisition at Goa has also been abolished; but of this we have seen no official account. That all our readers may be able to estimate the importance of these events, a concise view will be given of the nature and power of the Spanish tribunal, which was erected for the suppression of heresy and the support of the Roman catholic religion. The particulars will be collected from Dr. Campbell's xxvi Lecture on "Ecclesiastical History."

The Inquisitors, or judges of this court, are privileged to have their own guards and to give license to others to carry arms. Persons are encouraged to become accusers or witnesses before this tribunal, by having their names concealed from the accused. A public convict, a notorious malefactor, an infamous person, a common prostitute, and even children, are admitted as credible witnesses or accusers. The person, accused of heresy, is not only deprived of the privilege of meeting his accuser face to face, and of hearing the witnesses; but he is not even told in what particular he has offended. By tedious confinements in noisome dungeons, or by a train of the most excruciating tortures, he is compelled to inform against himself, to conjecture and to confess the crime laid to his charge, of which often he is entirely ignorant. This mode of proceeding makes the whole kingdom tremble. Suspicion reigns in every breast. Friendship and frankness are excluded. The brother dreads his brother, and the father his son.

By the papal bulls, it is ordained, that those, convicted of heresy, shall be *burnt alive*, and all their estate, real and personal, confiscated. This confiscation is a powerful motive to the Inquisitors to condemn those who have property. Princes and rulers are required to carry into effect the sentence of the Inquisition. If any refuse, they are liable to be anathematized, excommunicated, and to have their states or kingdoms laid under an interdict. The house, in which a heretic is apprehended, must be razed to the ground, although it be not his, but the property of one wholly unsuspected. Any one who threatens a notary, or other servant of the Inquisition, or even a witness, is held guilty of high treason, punished with death, his goods confiscated, and his children rendered infamous. The same punishment is to be inflicted on any one who escapes from the prison of the tribunal, or attempts to escape, and even on any one who intercedes for such unhappy victims.

Moreover, by a bull of Pius the 5th, it is decreed, that no sentence in favor of the accused shall be deemed a *final acquittal;* but at any time after, the Inquisitors have power to recommence the trial, on the same ground as before, without any additional evidence—This ordinance ensures to an accused person a course of terror and torment through life.

Although the terrors of this

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tribunal have in modern times been mitigated, its abolition must fill the Spaniards with joy, and it should be an occasion of gratitude throughout the christian world. But against the abolition of this engine of papal despotism, the Arch-bishop of Nicea, as the Pope's Legate, presented to the Spanish Regency a serious but unavailing protest.

Abstract of the Nuncio's protest against abolishing the Inquisition in Spain; addressed to the Lord President, and Supreme Council of the Regency. March 5th, 1813.

MOST SERENE LORD,

"The Nuncio of his Holiness has heard, in the greatest bitterness of his heart, that your Highness is on the eve of circulating and publishing the manifesto and decree of the august Congress, in which his Majesty declares the tribunal of the Holy Inquisition to be incompatible with the political constitution of the monarchy. No one feels more respect than I do towards that august Congress, nor will any one exceed my punctuality in obeying its wise commands. *But the subject in question belongs to the church*, and is of the greatest importance, as one in which religion is concerned, and from which it may suffer irreparable injury. A tribunal is going to be suppressed, which was established by the Holy Father in the exercise of his primacy and supreme authority over the church, for objects purely spiritual, as the preservation of the catholic faith and the extirpation of heresies. It being enjoined on me to do whatever I may find to be in favor of the church, and for the consolation and edification of the people, and the honor of the Holy See, I should be wanting in all these sacred duties, if, with the greatest respect, as well as with the christian liberty of an apostolic Legate and Representative of the Pope, I did not state to your Highness, that the abolition of the Inquisition may be extremely injurious to religion, whilst it actually wounds the rights and primacy of the Roman Pontiff, who established it, as necessary and beneficial to the church and the faithful. What can henceforward prevent the diminution of reverence and submission, which all christians owe to the decisions of the Vicar of Christ, the visible Head of the church, if in her very bosom, and during the sacrifice of the holy mass* they shall be told, that a tribunal established, kept up, and defended for three centuries, under the sanction of the most severe penalties, by the Pope, is not only useless, but detrimental to religion itself, and contrary to the wise and just laws of a catholic kingdom? If his Holiness were free, I should content myself with giving him notice of the event; but as he is most unfortunately kept in the captivity which we so much lament, I find it necessary and indispensable to protest in his name, against an innovation of such influence in the church of Spain, and which wounds the rights of the Supreme Pastor of the Universal church, the Vicar of Jesus Christ, &c."

Remarks on the protest of the Pope's Nuncio.

Several things in the important document now before us demand a serious consideration.

1. The avowed *object* of the Inquisition. This is stated to be "the preservation of the catholic faith, and the extirpation of heresies." The tribunal is established on these principles—that the Pope is the Vicar of Christ, the visible and infallible Head of the church; that he has a right to interpret the scriptures for the whole christian world, to require submission to his interpretations, and to inflict punishments on those who deny his authority, or dissent from his opinions. By *heresies* in that church, are intend-

* This refers to the order of the Cortes that the decree of abolition should be read on the three following Sundays, during high mass.

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ed opinions, which are opposed to those established by the Pope Every protestant is a *heretic*, according to the laws of the Inquisition, and would be liable to be "burnt alive," if within the power of the Inquisitors.

2. We may remark the Nuncio's deep concern for the interests of religion. In his view the Inquisition was "established, as necessary and beneficial to the church and the faithful." Consequently its *abolition* is something, "in which religion is concerned, and from which it may suffer irreparable injury." A concern for religion is ever the pretext for every species of persecution and intolerance. Under this pretext the very first principles of christianity are violated! From professed love to Christ, men can destroy those, for whom HE laid down his life! as though the purpose of his heavenly mission were to be carried into effect, by the most diabolical means, and abominable cruelties.

3. This tribunal has been "established, kept up, and defended for three centuries, under the sanction of the most severe penalties." The "severe penalties" have already been stated. The long time this tribunal had been "kept up" was probably considered by the Nuncio, as full proof of its propriety, and as a sufficient reason why it should not be abolished. This may show the danger of establishing, as of divine authority in the church, any institution, custom, creed, doctrine, or practice, of human invention. However absurd or abominable it may be in itself, the long continuance will be pleaded as proof of its propriety, and of the dreadful sin and danger of all attempts to set it aside.

4. It was "with the *christian liberty* of an apostolic Legate," that the Nuncio protested against "the abolition of the Inquisition," as a thing which may "be extremely injurious to religion, whilst it actually wounds the rights and the primacy of the Roman Pontiff."—Then, among the precious *rights* of the Pontiff, is the right of determining how other christians shall *understand* the bible, and how they shall *think*, to be accounted worthy of the privileges of christians, or even to live in God's world. The Pontiff is supposed to possess the right of depriving others of their rights, if they happen to dissent from his creed. On the same principle, it is a noble exercise "of christian liberty" in the Legate, to plead for the continuance of a tribunal which has for "three centuries" taken christian liberty from a whole nation, excepting a few favorites The Pope's rights of conscience imply a power to wrest the rights of conscience from all other christians. The Legate's "christian liberty" is a liberty to do all he can to prevent others from enjoying "christian liberty," and for continuing them in a state of absolute servility and degradation.

5. The Legate professes a readiness to submit to all the "wise commands" of the Cortes; "*But*," he adds, "*the subject in question belongs to the church, and is of the greatest importance.*" As the tribunal was established by the Pope in the exercise of his primacy, as the Vicar of Christ, it was, in the opinion of the Nuncio, independent of the civil authority, superior to it, and irresponsible to any power but that of his Holiness. How terrible must be the effects of a tribunal, thus independent of civil government, which has the power of inflicting the most excruciating tortures on persons of every description, and that too for only dissenting in opinion from the Pope or his Inquisitors. Let us suppose such a tribunal in this nation, to whom all the civil authorities are subordinate and subservient. Suppose, also that these Inquisitors have an innumerable company of spies in their employment, watching our words and actions, and anxiously seeking occasion for dragging one after another to the dungeons of the horrid tribunal! What could be more terrible? What chance would there be for the improvement of the mind, for the propagation of truth, or for recovery from error?

This important protest may help us to a correct view of some things, which have appeared in our own country. We live remote from the Roman Pontiff, and have but little ben-

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efit of his power for the suppression of free inquiry. Nor can we doubt, that there are clergymen in this land, who have as good a right, as his Holiness, to interpret the scriptures for others, and to set up their own interpretations as infallible, requiring all their brethren to submit to their decisions. Why then should we wonder if men, thus qualified, *associate* or *consociate*, and exercise their power for the "preservation of *their* faith, and the extirpation of heresies?" As there is not in every circle a tribunal already formed, why is it thought strange, that those who are conscious of their own infallibility, should wish to have new tribunals organized? If the Pope had a right to organize the tribunal of Inquisition, others, *equally infallible*, may be supposed to have *equal rights*. If the Nuncio, in the exercise of *his* "christian liberty," could plead for the continuance of a tribunal, which destroyed the christian liberty of ten millions of people, let it not be thought extraordinary if some in this land, in the exercise of *their* "christian liberty," make efforts for tribunals, which shall put an end to the "christian liberty" of all, who dissent from their opinions. As the *papal* Inquisitions are likely to be all set aside, this may be urged as a reason, why *protestant* Inquisitions should be multiplied. It will not be unprecedented if such tribunals are urged, "as necessary and beneficial to the church," or if the want of them be considered as "detrimental to religion itself." Nor let any be surprised, if the pleas in favor of such tribunals should be accompanied with expressions of great zeal and concern for the interests of religion; or if the advocates for them should, "in the greatest bitterness of their hearts," protest against any attempts, to prevent the existence of tribunals, so necessary to the support of *their* opinions. The Nuncio's protest is a model of excellency in that kind of writing; we would recommend it to the notice of all who wish for terrific tribunals in the church of Christ.

But let it be remembered, that ambition is among the things which never say "*It is enough.*" The papal Inquisition did not, like Jonah's gourd, grow up in one night. It was the fruit of a long course of gradual usurpation on the part of the clergy, and of encroachments on the christian liberties of the church. If tribunals should now be erected among us with all the power which has been proposed, let it not be imagined, that this will satisfy the cravings of those, who are *not* contented with the arrangements made by the Head of the church. If the first demand should be granted, this grant will be a stepping stone to higher power; and thus gradual advances will probably be made, until the tribunal shall be felt as a curse to community, a terror to every honest mind, and a shield for subservient and abandoned hypocrites. We do not believe that this is now *intended*, but it may be *expected* as the natural result, should the plan be adopted.

In our opinion, it was not an oversight in the Lord Jesus, that he neglected to institute the wished-for tribunals. He knew too well "what was in man" to delegate to any individual, or any class of men, dominion over the faith of others. The man who is not satisfied with the arrangements made by the Lord of glory, and who, like Absalom, is sighing out, "O that I were made judge in the land," is not, we believe, fit to be trusted with any more power, than is given him by the gospel. Those, who would be the best qualified for judges in such a tribunal, have so much sense of their own fallibility, that they would sooner suffer the pains of death, than accept such an office. The judges, therefore, would of course be men so ignorant, as not to be sensible of their own liability to err, and so puffed up with imagined self-sufficiency, as to be unworthy of confidence.

It will probably be pleaded, that no one in favor of new tribunals has any wish, that they may have power to *burn people alive* for erroneous opinions. This is probably true; but are they not in favor of penalties or punishments, *as really injurious and unjust?* If at this time their eyes are so

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blinded by prejudice, and their hearts so steeled by thirst for dominion, that they think it would be doing God service, to take from an unoffending brother his office, his character, and his means of living, because on some points he happens to know a *little less* or a *little more* than themselves; the time may soon arrive, when they will think that they may do still greater service for God, by adopting the penalties of the Spanish Inquisition. We are however "persuaded better things" of the clergy in general, "and things which accompany salvation, though we thus speak." The number in favor of new *protestant* Inquisitions, is we believe, so small, that the project must be suspended for a more convenient season; and if these few observations may be an occasion of its being forever postponed, our labor will not be in vain. We assure our readers, however, that we are both grieved and ashamed, that we have had any occasion to say a word on this subject, as applying to our own country. But as efforts have been boldly made, for erecting tribunals, as really inconsistent with christian liberty, and the rights of conscience, as the Spanish Inquisition; silence in us at this time might be viewed as evidence of a shameful timidity, or a shameless acquiescence.

Lest our views and feelings should be misapprehended, we add; that we do not consider all who may be in favor of inquisitorial tribunals, as destitute of piety and goodness. Some good men in this country, as well as in Rome or Spain, may be so prepossessed, as to really think the establishment of such tribunals "necessary and beneficial to the church." It is the *principle*, not the *patrons*, that we reprobate. The principle is this, that some christians have a right to exercise dominion over the faith of others, or to make their own interpretations of scripture the standard of faith for other people, and to punish such as dissent from their creed. Such we, believe, is the principle, on which the proposed tribunals must be formed, if formed at all. Such was the principle, on which the papal Inquisitions were formed, and from which all their horrid executions have resulted. From a similar principle have proceeded all the persecutions and martyrdoms since the crucifixion of the Messiah. And, in our view, this principle is not only the basis, but the very *worst part of popery*, and has done more mischief in the world than atheism itself. Since it was adopted by the council of Nice, it has not only slaughtered millions of the human family, but it has divided the church into numberless parties—excited the most bitter alienations between different sects—produced thousands of vindictive anathemas of one sect against another—impeded in an awful degree the progress of light and truth, even among protestants—bound the papal church in adamantine chains of darkness and superstition—and occasioned the pages of ecclesiastical history to be filled with narratives, which shock the feelings of the humble christian, and afford matter of derision and triumph, to hardened unbelievers. A principle, which has done so much mischief, which has so long been the bane and disgrace of the christian world, which encourages one man, or one class of men, to invade the *essential rights* of others, and in the most flagrant manner to violate the golden rule, by actually doing unto others, as they would *not* that others should do unto them, deserves the abhorrence of every human being. When this domineering principle, root and branch, shall be exterminated from the hearts and minds of men, truth will have free course, will run and be glorified; and the real friends of our exalted Saviour will be distinguished from the world, not by erecting intolerant tribunals, but by love one to another. No more will the door of admission to christian privileges be barred by human creeds; no more will christians of one sect say to those of another, stand by yourselves, for we are holier than you; no more will associations, or consociations, assume a popish dominion over the faith of their brethren in the ministry; and no more will reviling denunciation be substituted for preaching the gospel.

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POETRY.

To the Editor of the Christian Disciple.

THE following lines have little poetical merit, but they were written immediately after reading this passage in one of the odes of Frederick the Third of Prussia, to Marshal Keith:

"Après ma mort, quand toutes mes parties
Par la corruption seront anéanties,
Par un même destin, il ne pensera plus."*

ARE these the dictates of eternal truth?
These the glad news your boasted reason brings?
Can these restrain the daring fire of youth,
The craft of statesmen and the pride of kings?

Whence is the throb that swells my rising breast?
What lofty hopes my beating heart inspire?
Why do I proudly spurn inglorious rest,
The pomp of wealth, the tumult of desire?

Is it to swell the brazen trump of fame;
To bind the laurel round an aching head;
To hear for once a people's loud acclaim,
Then lie forever with the nameless dead?

Oh no—far nobler hopes my life control,
Presenting scenes of splendor—yet to be—
Great God! thy word directs the lofty soul
To live for glory—not from men—but Thee.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Note to the Report of the Trustees to the Evangelical Missionary Society, which appeared in the last number.

Note. To the above sum in the hands of the Treasurer being	1176 79
may be added monies, received since that account was closed,	282 55
making in the whole	$1455 34

Of this sum $300 have already been appropriated to the payment of the missionary services performed the last year in the District of Maine. The remainder is for future appropriation.

It may be satisfactory to the public to learn, that since the institution of the Society, in the year 1807, exclusive of the stated annual subscription of members, the following liberal donations have been received, viz.

From different Churches and Congregations in the Counties of Middlesex and Worcester	435 64
From Cent Societies of young ladies in four different towns	178 90
Collections at annual meetings of the Society	352 29
Donations from individuals	247 33
Amount	$1214 16

Since the formation of the Society, there has been expended for the support of Missionaries and Schoolmasters in the District of Maine $1235

* When after death my body yields to corruption, the same destiny also awaits my powers of thought.

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ABSTRACT OF SEVERAL FOREIGN ARTICLES, FROM PERIODICAL WORKS.

Society for promoting christian knowledge.

FROM the last year's report of this society it appears, that the income of the society during the year was as follows:

Benefactions and legacies,	£4,562 12 4
Subscriptions from members,	3,614 14 6
Dividends, &c.	6,422 6 9
Total,	14,599 13 1

The whole of this sum, excepting about £1,600, was expended in forwarding the various objects of the society. In less than two years 2,319 new members had been admitted into the society.

The books sent to the members of the society, from April 4, 1811, to April 9, 1812.—Bibles 12,667; New Testaments and Psalters, 21,971; Common prayers, 29,752; other bound books, 38,024; small tracts, 215,175. Gratuitous distribution—Bibles, 1,167; Testaments and Psalters, 2,655; Common prayers, 246; bound books, 499; Tracts 6,655. In future the society is to be relieved from the expense of supplying the navy with Bibles. The lords of the admiralty have, however, made the society their almoners, and 1,500l. sterling has already been advanced to pay for Bibles &c. for the navy.

Bible Society.

A letter from Munich to the British and Foreign Bible Society contains the pleasing account, that a catholic Bible Society at Ratisbon, printed in 1808, 28,000 copies of the New Testament; the whole of which had been disposed of, excepting about 1,000. Director Wittman adds, "I discover an increase of genuine christianity. The minds of many are changed for the better; they pray more earnestly; they boldly renounce the world. A new impression of our Testament is now printing. There yet remains thousands, and tens of thousands, both in towns and in the country, who are entire strangers to this holy book."

A letter from the chief minister of the Zurich Church, dated Sept 12, 1812, announces a new edition of the German version of the scriptures for the use of the *poor*. This was effected by aid from the British Bible Society.

Extracts of a letter from a catholic professor of divinity at the University of Marburg, to Mr. Steinkopff.

"I HAVE just received the pleasing news of your arrival in Stutgard, and your willingness to purchase 3,000 copies of our New Testament for distribution among our poor. I commenced the translation and printing of my New Testament, in humble reliance on God, and with a sincere wish to benefit his people. The first edition of 11,000 copies was disposed of in a few months. Of the second edition about 7,000, and of the third about 1,500 have been disposed of. How many do I hear, in these heavy times of oppression and distress, declaring the happiness they enjoy in the knowledge of their Bible, in the midst of all their troubles. How often did my heart bleed, to behold many coming to me from other parishes, soliciting the gift of a New Testament, representing with tears their poverty to be so great, that they were unable to spare the smallest sum for it; and yet it was not in my power to dispense the bread of life to these hungry souls."

From the bishop of Zealand to Lord Teignmouth.

"MY LORD, when I was informed, that the Society for spreading the knowledge of the Holy Bible had kindly printed the New Testament in the Danish language, to distribute copies to the *prisoners of war of my nation*, I hastened to convey to his Grace, the Arch-bishop of Canterbury, the expressions of my lively gratitude for a kindness, of which my heart feels all the obligation. I know not whether my wishes have been executed;

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but being informed, that it is your Lordship who presides over this worthy association, I do myself the honor of addressing myself directly to you, and of sending you, my Lord, a copy of the letter, which I had the honor of writing to the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury. I venture to offer to you the purest and most heart felt thanks, as well for the kindness which I have just mentioned, as for the very recent impression and distribution of the New Testament, in the Icelandic, and Laponese languages."

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On the first of August 1812, a society was formed at Columbo, called the Columbo Auxiliary Bible Society. The governor is president, and all the members of his Majesty's Council are vice-presidents.

Progress has been made in forming a Bible Society at Petersburg, his Imperial Majesty having sanctioned the measure.

A Bible Society has also been formed at Berlin, in reference to which, his Majesty the king of Prussia says, "It is with real satisfaction, that I discover the laudable endeavours of the Prussian Bible Society, for the gratuitous and cheap distribution of the Bible, to the poor of my dominions." The king also made a donation to the society.

East London Auxiliary Bible Society.

This society was formed Oct. 15, 1812. The Earl of Moira was called to the chair. A provisional committee had made inquiry, and found reason to suppose, that there were 8,000 families in the eastern district in London, who were destitute of the scriptures. They also reported, that a very general desire was manifested to obtain them.

Northeast London Auxiliary Bible Society.

This was formed March 16, 1813. The Duke of Kent took the chair. 500l. sterling was subscribed. Lord Gambier said, he considered his having been vice-president of the parent institution higher honor than all the titles and distinctions, which the liberality of his country had bestowed on him.

At the last annual meeting of the British and foreign Bible Society Dr. Thorpe stated, that when this society was first instituted, not one third of the inhabitants of Ireland had seen a Bible; that it was not to be sold in more than fifteen places—but a great change had been produced. All the different denominations of christians were eager to promote the cause; even the Roman catholics unite to promote it, and are eager to receive and read the Bible.

"Let us," said Lord Teignmouth, "trace the effects of the institution. From the people of the Esquimaux to those of Labrador, the different inhabitants of which are now seen reading the pages of the New Testament, with heart felt gratitude and delight. In Africa, even the poor and despised Hottentot had received the blessing with mingled prayers and tears. Among the Negroes of the West Indies the greatest tenderness, devotion, and benevolence have been shown, as the reward of their benefactors."

It may be doubted whether any single object, so benevolent in its nature, as that of placing the gospel in the hands of every class of people, in every land, was ever pursued with equal ardor by so great a portion of the christian world. It may also be doubted, whether any object was ever pursued, more calculated to unite the hearts of real christians of every sect.

Obituary.

Died, at Boston, Oct. 30, 1813, the Hon. Theophilus Parsons, Chief Justice of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, aged 64.

While storms assail'd the temple of our rights,
For years he stood a pillar of the state.
To speak his worth demands a tongue like his,
Which we have not;—but when this pillar fell
The temple shook, and awe spread through the land.

☞ Several valuable communications are unavoidably omitted.

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